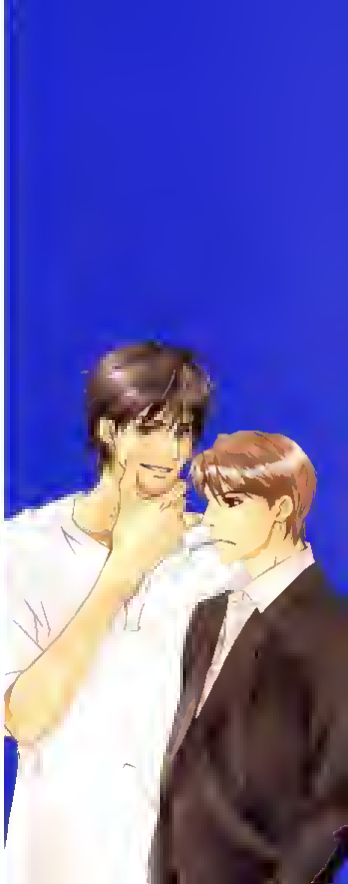
ARTIST ASOU KAI
DOB 19 JANUARY
STARSIGN CAPRICORN
BLOOD TYPE: A

Without fail, you'll always find a bar of chocolate next to my desk. I absolutely have to eat at least some of it everyday. Right now, I really want a cat.

STORY: SUGANO AKIRA
DOB 2 FEBRUARY
STARSIGN AQUARIUS
BLOOD TYPE: O
SERIALIZED WORKS INCLUDE TOKUMA SHOUTEN CHARA SERIES, "MAINICHI TENSHI SERIES, "SHINSHOUKAN NOVEL WINGS, "OKUJOU NO HIMAJIN" AND ETC
OTHER WORKS INCLUDE "KAIBA GA MIMI KARA KAKETEYUKU (1-4)" AND PUBLISHED ESSAY, "FUKENZEN NA SEISHIN DATTE KENZEN NA NIKUTAI NI YADORITAI NO DA"

Yay! I get to meet Takahashi again (though I'm sure I'm not the only one who likes him). Anyway, I'm looking forward to this!



ASUKA COMICS CL-DX
原作：菅野 彰
sugano akira
漫画：麻生 海
asou kai
Yakeino
no
NANDEMOYA

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Losers Convenience Agency
by underdog

Life does not move forward there.
As such, the three of us, all life's underdogs... stood deciding where we should go from here...
No matter which road we choose to take as we leave behind un fulfilled dreams,
life must go on.
Let's see...
Which way should we take?
...looking for a place where we could belong.
STRAIGHT AHEAD
DANGER!
ROAD TO NOWHERE
EXIT
Ah!
Amongst us, is him, Morita Torajirou. An ex-high school junior league baseball player who aims to become a professional.
Got it!
PON!
Donjara~!
Makeinu Nandemoya
Losers' Convenience Agency by underdogs
Chapter 1
T/L Note: Don_ara_chi is a game similar to mahjong where all tiles come in a set of 3. Those of you who played Suikoden IV will know.

Makeinu no
Nande Moya
Losers' Convenience Agency
Chapter 1
by underdogs

Aw...
YOU'RE TOO QUICK I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO BLINK
WELL, WHO ASKED YOU TO LET GO OF THAT BONUS TILE?
Sigh
THOUGH IT WAS PRETTY OBVIOUS THAT'S WHAT HE WAS AIMING FOR ALL ALONG
How 'bout another round?
Uuu
This is our ex-chef, Yanase Atsushi,
I'M THE OYA, SO THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN DO THAT, RIGHT?
whose restaurant, left to him by his deceased parents, got shut down.
And then there's me, Nakagawa Mikihiko.
ANYONE COULD'VE FIGURED THAT OUT WITH SOME INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES
Right
And together, the three of us established a Convenience Agency of sorts

T/L Note: During the course of a round of Mahjong, each player's turn is the Oya (or Parent) Player. The role of Oya (Senior Player, Kid, Parent, Eldest Player, Table Boss, Teacher, according to your whim) is important because the Oya always starts the round and opens play. Moreover, the Oya secures a 50% bonus each time he completes a hand.

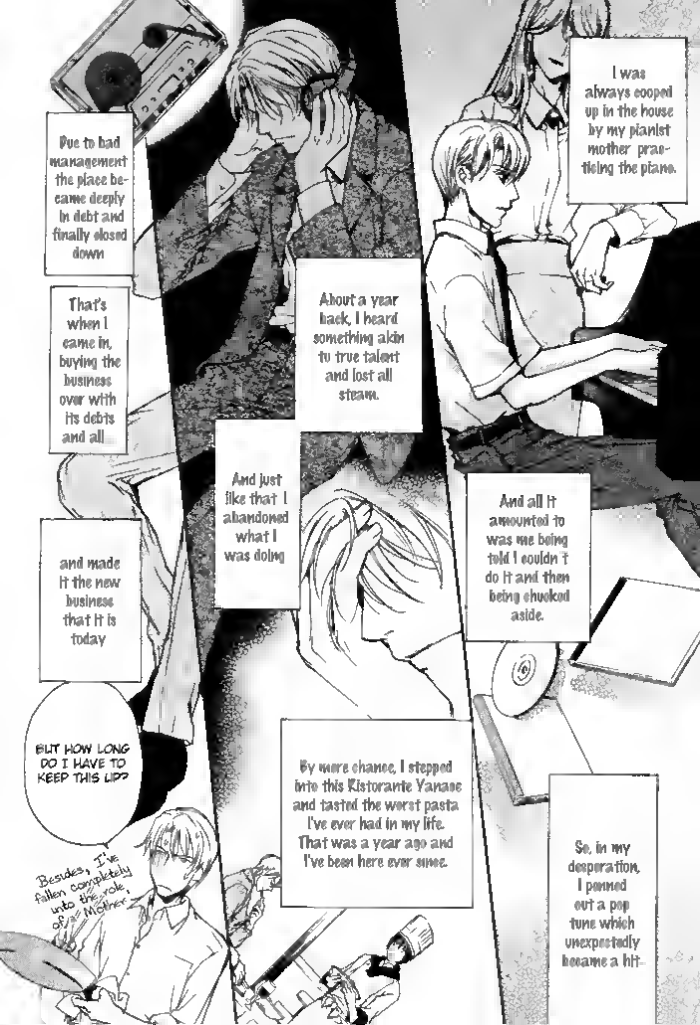
ALL WE EVER SEE YOU DO DURING BROAD DAYLIGHT IS PLAYING THIS, OR COOKING UP SOMETHING IN THE KITCHEN OR ANSWERING PHONE CALLS
LET'S SEE YOU ACTUALLY CARRY ONE OUT FIRST. ALRIGHT?
LIKE YOU'RE ONE TO TALK
Convenience Agency Nandemoari
You tell him, Atsushi!
"NANDEMOARI" IS A CONVENIENCE AGENCY, NOT A DETECTIVE ONE
AND COULD YOU STOP ACCEPTING EVERY DARN THING WHENEVER WE'RE NOT AROUND?
...though there are times you just let it ring right off the hook.
Hey!
AND WHAT KIND OF NAME IS "NANDEMOARI" ANYWAY?!

T/L Note: Nandemoari = It means anything goes. It's like naming your dog "Dog". You know, that sort of thing.

AND THEN, THERE'S THIS PLACE
IT STILL HAS A RESTAURANT SET-UP!
This has torrential ex-owners
You have morning sickness? Can't you do something about that?
Used to be: Ristorante Yanase

HALF OF THE PEOPLE WHO COME HERE STILL THINK THIS IS A RESTAURANT
ALL THANKS TO A SIGN THAT SAYS "NANDE-MOARI"
AND WHAT'S WITH ALL THE WEIRD TASTES OF THOSE SO-CALLED CUSTOMERS??!
Um, not there !! says, "Anything right? You got some kinda super special dish or something? To go?"
The entry is no use when this really HAS a res trau-ant
Uhm
Let's install a full-leather lounge, damn it!
Good workers need a good working environment!
DON'T MOST CLIENTS CALL AFTER SEEING THE LEAFLET?
AND IT'S BEEN A YEAR SO I'M USED TO THE WAY THINGS ARE NOW
Fine, whatever
BUT COULDN'T YOU HAVE AT LEAST PICKED BETTER JOBS??
All we handle are paid domestic jobs looking for missing pets is supposed to be on as well as off
NAKAGAWA SAN YOUR SORRY STATE...
Was fermented till the worst in the unconscious level
AND IT'S NOT LIKE ATSUSHI HERE CAN HANDLE SOMETHING AS DELICATE AS SPYING ON CHEATING LOVERS
What with him always being a disaster
I MEAN, WHOEVER HEARD OF A 'SPY' GOING UP TO THE SUSPECT AND TELLING HIM 'OH, I THINK I'VE SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE,' LIKE DUH! FILE PICTURES??!! HELLO??
In disguise
AND HE EVEN GOES ALL THE WAY TO POLITELY SAY 'HOW DO YOU DO?' !!!

Arrogant Yaoi girl!
One-n wannabe Sherrif!
Ho, I see!
Wahahaha
Sigh
THOSE TWO
THEY'RE ALWAYS LIKE THIS
Before I ended up like this I was once a music composer
AND LIKE YOU'RE SO MUCH BETTER?! GRABBING THE CLIENT'S CHEATING HUSBAND AND YELLING "SCUMBAG" TO HIS FACE!
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE HE SUSPECTED ANYTHING!
I'M GONNA GO FIX DINNER.
What's so funny with that?!
I'm dealing with pups.
Didn't we all agree on omelette tonight?
HEY!
I want Spaghetti pasta!
Omelette!
Omurice!
Pasta!
Omelette!
Well, one's a little too big to be considered as one but it's the inside that counts anyway
At least it looks like they're having fun—
Seems they've been like this with each other ever since their childhood days.


I was always cooped up in the house by my pianist mother practicing the piano.
Due to bad management the place became deeply in debt and finally closed down
That's when I came in, buying the business over with its debts and all
About a year back, I heard something akin to true talent and lost all steam.
And just like that I abandoned what I was doing
And all it amounted to was me being told I couldn't do it and then being chucked aside.
and made it the new business that it is today
BUT HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO KEEP THIS UP?
By mere chance, I stepped into this Ristorante Yanase and tasted the worst pasta I've ever had in my life. That was a year ago and I've been here ever since.
So, in my desperation, I penned out a pop tune which unexpectedly became a hit.
Besides, I've fallen completely into the role of a Mother.

Aw, damn, I wanted omelettes...
YESSS!
IT'S PASTA!
I win!
Don't roll around on the floor
WOULD YOU TWO STOP THIS PRO-WRESTLING SHIT ALREADY?
Owwwww!
I said PASTA!!!
Mmmmm!
Miki-chan, you're like Mr. Mom!?
I really, really wanted omelettes, Mommy
And stop pushing Tohan to the end of the couch!
Now
bring me a woman right now!
CLICK
SOMEONE CALLED?
Startle
!
...A WO-MAN
MOMMY
WHAT WE NEED IS A WOMAN!
I'm really feeling the urgent to kill here...
But Tohan, you don't think you have a little mommy?
WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO CALLING ME MOMMY, A WOMAN IS WHAT WE NEED!

Whoa shock of his life
oh
ka
"KAORU!
you're the last thing on earth I would consider a woman!
click
click
click
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S STARTED UP A CONVENIENCE AGENCY. HM?
WHAT IF I DID? IT'S AS GOOD A JOB AS ANY!
SOME ONE CALLED?
SHE A CUSTO-MER?
WOW!
TALK ABOUT PRETTY
OOH
OOH!

Ahah aha haha!
SNICKER
SO, YOU'LL ACCEPT ANYTHING. WE EVEN DO SOME SPYING ON CHEATING LOVERS.
...JUST ABOUT ANY JOB, AM I RIGHT?
Didn't we just say we don't wanna?
That's gotta be the joke of the century!
Spying on cheating lovers? You?
Who was it that didn't even notice anything until she was gone?
Whose wife was it that slept with another woman right under his nose?
Um...
JUST WHO IS THIS LADY
WHO AM I?
OH, I'M NOBODY JUST HIS FIRST WIFE
Miki-chan? You alright there?
uhu
Oh right. There was one thing I forgot to mention when laying my personal history bare.

THE FIRST WIFE WHO STOLE THE SECOND
You're like the symbol for all unfortunate men in this world
Is this the part of your life which you never told us?
Talk-okay you've been living in Germany for a long time
You must've had a lot of fun
You're back in Japan well I'm happy for you
After graduating from a college of music, I met a lyricist and got completely played out.
"That's right, just place your seal right there."
SO...
ARE YOU TWO DOING OK?
We went steady under the pretense of marriage before I finally got tossed out like dirty laundry
We sure are!
OUR RELATIONSHIP'S GOING -VERY- STRONG INDEED
What's more, she stole my beautiful second bride from right under my nose!
BUT
THERE'S JUST ONE THING
All this and more, thanks to this woman right here.

SHE WAS STRAIGHT BEFORE
IF SHE'S GONE OUT WITH MEN BEFORE, SHE'S MARRIED THEM BEFORE TOO!
THIS MAKES ME WANNA HUNT THOSE MEN DOWN ONE BY ONE
AND MAKE MINCE MEAT OUT OF ALL OF 'EM!!
And I'm not talking about chopping off fingers first either
I-Then where are you gonna chop first?
tremble
tremble
DON'T TELL ME THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO HIRE US FOR?
WE'RE NEITHER ASSASSINS NOR DETECTIVES HERE YOU KNOW?
Hmph
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN EXPECT A MAN LIKE YOU TO BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT
rustle
WHAT I WANT TO HIRE YOU FOR HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT I'VE JUST TALKED ABOUT.
rustle...
I WANT YOU TO PUT MUSIC TO THESE WORDS

I'M NOT WRITING ANY MUSIC
ARE YOU SAYING THAT YOU'RE NOT ACCEPTING THE JOB?
I'VE SAID IT BEFORE, AND I'LL SAY IT AGAIN
I'M NEVER COMPOSING AGAIN. NEVER, KAORU
FINE. I GET IT
THEN HOW ABOUT YOU FIND ME SOMEONE WHO CAN WRITE MUSIC THAT WILL SUIT THIS?
WAIT... THAT'S...
I'LL GIVE YOU HALF THE ROYALTY GAINED FROM THESE LYRICS.
DAMN!

YOU SEEM TO BE DOING PRETTY WELL
YEAH I'M AT THE POINT WHERE PEOPLE LITERALLY GET DOWN ON THE FLOOR TO BEG ME TO WRITE
BUT THIS ONE IS DIFFERENT
THIS IS SOMETHING THAT'S ONLY FOR HER TO SING
SO IT WAS WRITTEN ESPECIALLY IN HER IMAGE.
SLAM
A-
AND YOU STILL HAVE THE CHEEK TO ASK NAKAGAWA-SAN TO COMPOSE THE MUSIC ????
NO-
NO WAY WE'RE DOIN' IT, YO!
YOU CAN'T EXPECT POOR MIKI-CHAN TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT!!
SIT
SHOCK
Hop

THIS IS A VERY PERSONAL PROJECT I'VE ALREADY SET THE CONDITIONS
I'M WILLING TO PUT DOWN 10,000,000 AS DOWN PAYMENT
T...te...
10,000,000 !?!?!?
FULL-LEATHER LOUNGE AND THE LATEST COMMUNICATION GADGETS! I CAN SMELL 'EM ALL!
WOW
HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT RE-MODELING THIS PLACE?
It's still in the middle restaurant set-up
Wouldn't you say so?
We're gonna be rich, Tora-san! ;;
SO DO WE HAVE A DEAL, NAKAGAWA?
THIS IS NOT SOMETHING ONLY YOU CAN DO. YOU KNOW.

Slide
In work and in love,
My shoes can be easily filled
THE WORLD IS SWARMING WITH REPLACEABLE PEOPLE LIKE YOU
things aren't really that different
AND WITH THAT,
PEOPLE MOVE ON
EVEN WITHOUT YOU AROUND, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SOMEONE TAKES YOUR PLACE IN COMPOSING MUSIC
IT'S TIME YOU ACCEPT THE FACT AND MOVE ON. YOU'RE NOT A CHILD ANY LONGER
HERE'S THE DOWN PAYMENT.

I'LL COME PICK UP THE FINISHED WORK NEXT FRIDAY
IF THIS PLACE IS REALLY WHAT YOU CALL IT
THEN YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO THIS AT LEAST
click
click
click
slam
WHY'D YOU EVEN MARRY HER TO BEGIN WITH?
Is she gone?
Seems like it
Yeah
whee
eew
That totally wore us out

WELL, YOU HAVE EYES, RIGHT?
SO IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS WHY, ISN'T IT?
WOW... WHO KNEW YOU COULD BE SO SHALLOW...
Well
THAT'S BEHIND US NOW...
flick
...TAKAHASHI RYOUICHI
Waaah...
That's what I wanna say but the money's just too good!!
Cash! For the first time since forever, I'm seeing cash!
What are we gonna do with all this money, anyway?
quiver
quiver
?

IF WE GET CAN GET HIM TO COMPOSE, THEN THIS JOB IS AS GOOD AS DONE
WHETHER IT'S TEN MILLION OR TWENTY, WE'LL TAKE WHAT WE CAN GET
TAKAHASHI... WHO'S THAT?
HE'S A COMPOSER, TOO?
Feels like I've heard of him and yet not
WELL, HE'S NOT A BIG SHOT COMPOSER BUT HE'S PRETTY FAMOUS IN HIS OWN RIGHT
AND HE OWES ME A FAVOR.
WHAT SORT OF FAVOR DOES HE OWE YOU?
Hmmmm
Hm
LET'S JUST SAY I'VE HELPED HIM OUT BEFORE IN A LIFE-THREATENING SITUATION WHEN HE WAS IN A DRUNKEN STATE.
YOU DID?
He was throwing up but kept on coming so I kicked his lights out.
YOU, NAKAGAWA, ARE A STRANGE MAN.
His getting on my nerves and my not killing him for it has made me his benefator, more or less
Sigh
HE'S RIGHT, SO NOT EVEN I CAN HELP YOU OUT THERE.
Takahashi Ryouichi
23
TAKAHASHI RYOUICHI.

IS THIS REALLY THE PLACE? WHY WOULD A GUY WITH THE CALIBER OF MAKING A SENSATIONAL HIT LIVE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
I FIND IT STRANGER THAT NAKAGAWA-SAN WOULD KEEP THE NAME CARDS OF ALL HIS PAST PEERS
HE ALWAYS LOOKS LIKE HE'S BORED STIFF WITH WHAT-EVER HE'S DOING.
BUT SEEING MIKI-CHAN SO DISTRACTED... THAT'S A FIRST FOR ME
YEAH, THAT'S REALLY UNLIKE HIM, HUH?
THEN AGAIN HAVING BEEN TOLD THAT, WHO COULD BLAME HIM?
"THIS IS NOT SOMETHING ONLY YOU CAN DO, YOU KNOW."

TORAJIROU?
What's wrong?
YEAH
IT SURE DOES, DOESN'T IT?
WHAT I MEAN IS, SHE COULD'VE BEEN MORE CONSIDERATE AND TACTFUL
OTHER PEOPLE WOULD'VE HOW SHOULD I PUT IT?
This is just
It seems even more pathetic now that we're talking about it
LATELY
I'VE BEEN THINKING
ABOUT THAT.
ABOUT THAT? ABOUT WHAT EXACTLY?
"PEOPLE MOVE ON." WASN'T THAT WHAT THE "BAA-SAN" SAID?
Nay, nay, I meant nee-sama
She could be overhearing us right now
I really doubt she has the time for that
Baa-san = Aunty
Nee-san = Big Sister

T/L note *Sake-denier

SO WHAT ABOUT WHAT SHE SAID?
YEAH.
MY DAD...
HE WAS BORN TO A SAKAYA* FAMILY AND DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE TO ENTER A UNIVERSITY.
HE'D ALWAYS WONDERED IF THERE WERE OTHER ROUTES HIS LIFE COULD TAKE.
IN THE END, HE DIDN'T ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING AND PICKED UP THE DRINKING HABIT.
EVERYDAY WAS TEDIOUS AND ROUTINE BUT STILL LIFE GOES ON.
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.
WHAT I MEANT WAS, EVEN SO HE CONTINUES TO SLOG WITHOUT COMPLAINT, HAS OFFSPRING AND LIVES HIS LIFE BY THE DAY.
HE'S LIVING ALRIGHT, AND WITH EVERY OUNCE OF HIS STRENGTH, TOO
TIRELESSLY TAKING CARE OF HIS WIFE AND KIDS.
AS FOR ME...

I WONDER, IS THIS REALLY WHAT THEY CALL 'LIVING?'
WITH ALL THESE LIES
ARE RIGHT THERE
AND IT'S LIKE I'M NOT SEEING THEM ...
PILING ON TOP OF EACH OTHER?
OR RATHER, I CAN'T SEE THEM ...
WHEN THE THINGS THAT I CARE ABOUT
I GET THIS FEELING THAT IF I KEEP THIS UP, MY WHOLE LIFE WILL BECOME A LIE.
TORA-JIROU?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
NOTHING EVER DID. AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM

Yeah.
I THINK WE ARE ANYWAY.
UM.
If this address is anything to go by,
WELL, ENOUGH WITH THIS TALK
ARE WE NEARING THE PLACE YET?
NO WAY. YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
THIS DUMP?
A HOTSHOT JAPANESE POP MUSIC COMPOSER? IN SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT???
YOU TWO! YOU FRIENDS OF THAT TAKAHASHI??
YOU TELL HIM, IF HE EVER PLAYS HIS GODDAMNED PIANO IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AGAIN, I'LL KILL HIM!
SOO... SOMEWHERE IN THIS HOUSE
...IS A PIANO...
Yawn
sters these days never
Listen
I tell ya!
thump
thump
thump

No doorbell, either, what a dump
TAKA-HASHI-SAN!
TAKA-HASHI-SAN!!
WHICH MEANS WE'RE RIGHT WHERE WE SHOULD BE RIGHT?
HEEEEY!
WHAT IS IT?
!!
YOU TWO DEBT-COLLEC-TORS OR SOME-THING?
thump thump thump thump
WHEN DID HE ?
SO ARE YOU OR ARE YOU NOT DEBT-COLLECTORS?
'COS IF YOU ARE THEN I SUGGEST YOU BETTER START RUNNING
Are you Taka-hashi-san?
Could he... What's it to you!

WOW, HE'S A LOOKER, THIS ONE
HUH???
I MAY HAVE THE CASH FOR YOU THEN AGAIN, I MAY NOT
WELL,
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT HIS FEATURES ARE RATHER ELEGANT
BUT YOU REALLY AREN'T A STICKLER FOR DETAILS ARE YOU, TORAJIROU?
I mean you totally overlooked the 5 o'clock shadow and the sloppy hair...
THE VENTILATION HERE S GOOD
If you're wondering...
ANYWAY, IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY BUSINESS WITH ME I M GOING IN.
We're from a convenience agency
WE'VE GOT A COMPOSING JOB FOR YOU
NOPE NOW'S NOT A GOOD TIME

I said I'm not doing it! Geez don't you listen?
THERE AIN'T ENOUGH INSPIRATION FOR ME IN A PLACE LIKE THIS
RUN ALONG NOW
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU ANYWAY? YOU'VE GOT SLOB WRITTEN ALL OVER YOU.
WHAT A WASTE OF SUCH LADY-KILLER LOOKS.
Hahaha!
LADY-KILLER'S A PRETTY OUT-DATED TERM, YOU KNOW? ESPECIALLY COMING FROM SOMEONE AS YOUNG AS YOU
BUT I LIKE YOU KID SO LET'S DRINK TO THIS!
AH!
TORA JIROU!!
WAIT, I SAID!! YOU REALLY THINK IT'S A TIME TO BE DRINKING???!
AH
BUT I HEARD YOUR TOLERANCE TO ALCOHOL IS PRETTY LOW
MAYBE I DO BUT I LIKE ALCOHOL SO WHO CARES?
HE ASKS! FINALLY!
WHO'D YOU HEAR THAT FROM ANYWAYS?

Before you act as a Fratello with Tuna-jisou?
DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD'VE ASKED THAT RIGHT FROM THE START?
TO ASK YOU TO COMPOSE A SONG FOR US
WE CAME ON NAKAGAWA-SAN'S RECOMMENDATION
NAKAGAWA...

TAKE ME THERE!
TAKE ME TO WHERE HE IS!
REMEMBER HIM? I MORE THAN REMEMBER HIM!
YA MEAN, NAKAGAWA MIKIHIKO?
AH, YOU REMEMBER HIM?
SO HE'S STILL AROUND?
HE'S STILL WELL AND ALIVE AND LIVING IN THIS WORLD???
THEN THIS'LL MAKE THINGS EASIER
!
Static
Static
Static
Fizzle
hmm
THERE'S NOTHING GOOD ON RADIO THESE DAYS

AH.
Classical?
THIS SURE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES
IT'S THE SONG I PLAYED DURING THE GRADUATION CEREMONY
HM, THAT'S A STRANGE PLAYING STYLE THIS PIANIST HAS
It's not unpleasant, though.

LET'S LISTEN TO SOMETHING ELSE, THEN
sigh
!!!!!
SCREECH
SCREECH
SCREECH
THE SOUND OF THIS DRIVING...
shudder
CLICK
DON'T TELL ME...
TAKAHASHI'S...
ha ha ha!
Ahaha, sorry bout the ruckus!
I've never met anyone who could drive this badly
shrug
YOU!! Were you trying to kill us or something?!?!

WOW IT'S TRUE...
YOU'RE ALIVE...

Chapter 1 END

Makeinu no Nandemoya

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Losers' Convenience Agency
Chapter 2
by underdogs

Get off me, you creep!
Let go of me!
you're the last person I want to see!!!
rustle
Gasp
IF IT WEREN'T FOR —YOU— I WOULDN'T HAVE
Uh,
WERE YOU TWO CLOSE TO EACH OTHER OR SOMETHING?
Ah
UNLESS YOU'RE THAT GUY WHO WROTE THE SONG WHICH TOTALLY DISHEARTENED NAKAGAWA-SAN, WHICH ULTIMATELY MADE HIM DECIDE TO STOP?

Well, he sure does look drab!
SO, I I
THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT
YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO TELL NOW BUT THIS GUY HERE'S THE ONE WHO WROTE THAT INCREDIBLE PIECE OF MUSIC.
POKE
OH MY GOODNESS! WHAT HAVE WE DONE?!
Takahashi-san, could you please help me?
WHY DID YOU SUDDENLY DISAPPEAR LIKE THAT?
IT'S NOT YOU I LEFT. IT'S THE WHOLE INDUSTRY ITSELF
Why?
KNOWING WHAT YOU DID TO HAVE CAUSED NAKAGAWA-SAN THIS MISERY, I'D BE MORE CAREFUL WITH MY WORDS IF I WERE YOU!
I KNOW THAT
Would you like a wedgie?
I KNOW WHAT I DID, NAKAGAWA-SAN
YOU DIDN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION
That really was so sensitive it even surprised me

EH? YOU MEAN, THAT'S NOT IT?
If you knew, then you shouldn't have looked at all!
Grrr, don't touch me!
WHICH IS WHY I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!
KUTE
YOU'RE PISSED AT ME BECAUSE YOU SPENT THE NIGHT WITH ME WHEN I WAS DRUNK OUT OF MY WITS, RIGHT?
Let Go Of Me!
St-
Stop spewing rubbish!!!
IT HAPPENS PRETTY OFTEN WITH ME BUT I COULDN'T FORGET ABOUT YOU FOR SOME REASON.
SO THAT'S WHY I CAME LOOKING
ch!
HUH?
HUH!!!

If I did, I'm really sorry.
WHEN I WOKE UP, I WAS BUTT NAKED
SERIOUSLY. I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED THE NIGHT BEFORE BUT I DIDN'T FORCE YOU OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT, DID I?
THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED
Just try to recall!
FIRST,
YOU YACKED ALL OVER ME SO THE TWO OF US BOTH LOOKED PRETTY SORRY. THEN WE WENT BACK TO MY PLACE WHERE YOU TOOK A SHOWER
I WAS PRETTY POOPED MYSELF THAT NIGHT SO I JUST FELL DEAD ASLEEP THE MOMENT MY BODY HIT THE BED
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU WOULD'VE MISUNDERSTOOD THE SITUATION SO THOROUGHLY
THERE REALLY ISN'T ANYTHING TO BE EMBARRASSED ABOUT. WHY, DIDN'T BOTH OF YOUR EX-WIVES ALSO—
WELL, YEAH, BUT
eh?
WAIT, HOW'D YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?!

I GUESS NO ONE SAID ANYTHING TO YOU 'COS THEY FELT SORRY FOR YOU
WELL I'M NOT USUALLY ONE TO BE INTERESTED IN THOSE KINDS OF AFFAIRS BUT THIS IS A PRETTY WELL-KNOWN STORY THAT'S BEEN CIRCULATING IN THE INDUSTRY FOR A WHILE NOW...
NAKAGAWA MIKIHIKO'S SECOND WIFE LEAVING HIM FOR HIS FIRST...
And you?! Shouldn't you feel the same?!
How could you have said what you just did?!
If you did,
TORAJI-ROU...
LET'S NOT INSULT THOSE WHO ARE SANE IN THE INDUSTRY
THESE TWO... THEY'RE IN A LEAGUE ALL OF THEIR OWN
Just because it's all true doesn't mean you can say it however you want.
Sorry about that then.
Hmm... well
AS I'VE SAID, I'M NOT USUALLY ONE TO CARE ABOUT THESE SORTS OF GOSSIPS.
BUT SINCE IT'S ALL TRUE, WHO CARES ANYWAY, RIGHT?
Are you following? Because I don't think I am.
Is the music industry full of eccentric people like these two?
LET US thank our lucky stars we're not born as eccentric artists and let us give our sympathy TO those who are less fortunate
Thank you, mother. Thank you, Father.

THERE REALLY IS NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF.
There's lots to be ashamed of,
as a man and as a human being!
BUT THE FACT STILL REMAINS THAT I CAN'T FORGET ABOUT YOU,
There there.
O ONE NIGHT STAND OF MINE
I thought you said that these sorts of things are nothing to you!!
hoho
WELL, YEAH BUT
YOU CRIED THAT NIGHT

YOU, WITH THE STRONG EYES, TREMBLED AND BITTERLY WEPT.
WITHIN THESE TWO ARMS OF MINE.
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING ANYONE CAN EASILY FORGET.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY TRY.
A MAN OF MY AGE, CRYING? HA!
THOSE ARE ALL IN YOUR DREAMS!
BUT YOU DID.
JUST GO.

GO, I SAID!
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOUR FACE RIGHT NOW!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU I'LL GO
BUT I'LL BE BACK!
DON'T SHOW YOUR MUG AROUND HERE AGAIN!
SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT BUT I'LL COME AGAIN
I'M JUST GLAD THAT YOU'RE STILL AROUND
5/Dm

WHO'D HE BRIBE TO GET HIS LICENSE ANYWAY?
OH, WAIT, NAKAGAWA-SAN...
It's true
HE'S A DEVIL ON THE ROAD.
OTHER THAN SONG WRITING, HE'S GOOD FOR NOTHING ELSE.
SCREEEK
RoL
VROOOOM
THERE HE GOES...
SIMPLE. THE TWO OF YOU GO OVER, GET HIM TO DO IT AND THEN BRING IT BACK
OH YEAH! WHY'D YOU HAVE TO TELL HIM NOT TO SHOW HIS MUG AGAIN?!
Uhh
WHAT ARE WE GOING DO ABOUT THE COMMISSION FROM KAORU-SAN NOW?
HE HATES WOMEN BUT HE DIDN'T STRIKE ME AS THE TYPE TO SWING THAT WAY EITHER...
He said it himself, too
How come?
I'm bored speechless.
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE RELATION-SHIP BETWEEN MIKI-CHAN AND THAT GUY JUST NOW?
Aw, you shouldn't drink that down in a single gulp

crunch
WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO STRAIGHTEN THE FACTS OUT FOR YOU AGAIN?
THAT WAS JUST AN EXCUSE WASN'T IT?
Riiinight
WHO KNEW MIKI-CHAN, THE WOMAN-HATER, ACTUALLY MEANT THAT HE GOES FOR THE PLAY-BOY TYPE...
BUT I HONESTLY THINK WHAT HURTS YOUR REPUTATION MORE IS THE FACT THAT YOUR EX-WIVES SLEPT TOGETHER
Whoa
huhng
YEAH... AND LET'S NOT THAT FORGET THAT, SHALL WE?
Whoops there
I WAS DRUNK THAT NIGHT!
BUT JUST BEING ON THE SAME BED WITH THAT FELLOW IS ENOUGH TO PUT A PERMANENT STAIN TO ANYONE'S REPUTATION!
AND THAT'S...

YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULD REALLY TRY TO MOVE ON FROM THAT ALREADY THE WORLD'S STILL SPINNING AROUND EITHER WAY.
I'M HEADING HOME.
MIKI-CHAN
Creak
WOMEN WERE OUT AND
NOW MEN ARE OUT, TOO
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?
Why does everyone keep asking me that?
S/am
BACK OFF!
I'M DOING GREAT ON MY OWN!
I'm not too sure but I think he mentioned before something along the lines of Arabia...
Speaking of which, where does Miki-chan stay exactly?

I'm OK.
I can go on just fine on my own.
Where are you?
Ayaya—!
Ayaya!!
rushe rushe
rushe
rushe
rushe
AYAYA CHAN!
Ayaya-chan?
Here !! kitty, kitty! Ayaya-chan!
Sheesh, do you honestly think that just calling the name !! work?
FIRST, EVERYONE THINKS I'M AN AIRHEAD
sigh
Now I can't even fold a measly cat
CAN YOU EVER RECALL A CASE WHICH WE CAN EASILY HANDLE?
Well, let's see
WHEN WE WERE CLEANING THAT POOL, WE USED UP TWO BOTTLES OF BLEACH AND ALMOST ENDED UP KILLING OURSELVES...
AND WE STILL HAVEN'T COVERED BEYOND 10% OF THE LOVER'S INVESTIGATION ASSIGNMENT...
sigh

THINGS LIKE CHATTING WITH RETIRED OLD MEN AND SHOPPING FOR OLD WOMEN, THAT WE CAN DO
But then again
AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT JUST DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT
ACCEPTING MONEY FROM THEM FOR MENIAL TASKS LIKE THAT
I GUESS WE REALLY AREN'T MUCH USE TO THE SOCIETY AT LARGE.
WELL WE COME IN PRETTY HANDY WHENEVER MIKI-CHAN HAS THE URGE TO VENT
Sigh...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT IT LIKE THAT. WE SHOULD JUST BE GRATEFUL WE'RE OF ANY USE AT ALL.
HEH IF YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, THEN I GUESS WE'RE NOT COMPLETE WASTES OF SPACE AFTER ALL
I THOUGHT HE ALREADY SAID HE WOULDN'T LIKE 10 000 TIMES ALREADY?
YOU KNOW, THAT GUY...
Hm? Who are you talking about? Hata-yama san?
Aaaaahhhh
Hayk, she went that way?
I WONDER IF HE REALLY MEANS IT NOT COMPOSING ANYMORE, I MEAN.
THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S HAVING A HARD ENOUGH TIME
JUST NOT THINKING ABOUT IT

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?
HM....
YOU KNOW...
YOU'VE BEEN REALLY WEIRD LATELY.
Huh?
YOU THINK SO?
How come?
WELL... I CAN'T REALLY EXPLAIN IT BUT...
WHA-
HEY...
Yip!
ARE YOU AYAYA-CHAN?
I THOUGHT SHE LOOKED WAY STRANGE FOR A CAT FROM THE WAY THE PICTURE LOOKED,
BUT I GUESS SHE REALLY IS A DOG AFTER ALL.
NAKAGAWA-SAN WAS THE ONE WHO TOOK THIS JOB.
WE REALLY CAN'T KEEP GOING LIKE THIS.
BUT this really brings what we were just talking about into perspective, doesn't it?
Anyway
AFTER WE'VE RETURNED AYAYA-CHAN HERE TO HER OWNER,
LET'S GO PAY TAKAHASHI-SAN A VISIT.
I wanna try asking him about the job again

NOW GET UP OFF YOUR ASS AND START WORKING LIKE THE REST OF US!
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A TOTAL BRAT.
AIN'T GOING.
WAS WHAT HE SAID
"IF NAKAGAWA-SAN ISN'T HERE I DON'T EVEN WANT TO HEAR IT."
CONVENIENCE ANNEX Mart-Haven
I'M GONNA READ THIS MESSAGE OUT LOUD.
And I'll read it REAL loud, too!
"To MY dearly beloved."
"To MY cold hearted lover,
What are you looking at? What are you thinking of now? I wonder. Are you thinking of me in the least? I wonder."

"I think of you every moment of every day...?"
grab
If you don't stop right this very instant
I'll KILL you!
missed

I'LL GET THIS OVER WITH AND BE BACK BEFORE YOU EVEN KNOW IT. LORD KNOWS THAT I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO GETS THINGS DONE AROUND HERE
Snatch
FINE I'LL GO

THERE ARE NO BUTTONS TO SPEAK OF!
I THINK IT'S A GOOD THING, THOUGH
Snatch
THERE'S NOTHING REMOTELY GOOD ABOUT IT!
HEH HE REALLY KNOWS WHICH BUTTONS TO PUSH, EH?

Getting by on your own is a lot easier said than done
We humans are not made for it
Ch—!
Maybe you crossed the line a little back there.
I only said what needed to be said.
But there're lots of people who don't like to hear the truth
That so? I thought it was a pretty clean and neat way to do things. Just tell it like it is.
It's easy to read what he's thinking. I appreciate people like that.
And that's where you and Takaha-shi-san are similar.
Must've been love...
Don't think I didn't notice that you and Nakagawa-san have trouble meeting each other's eyes
What are you talking about?

I HAVE NO IDEA WHA
...PUT AWAY THE ACT AL-READY
WHAT'S GOIN—
grin
WHAT I'M SAYING IS LOVE'S ALL AROUND US
I THINK THE ONE WHO'S WEIRDING OUT THESE DAYS
...IS YOU

POP
Ah, Nakagawa!
OK, I'M HERE.
WHA- WHY'S THIS HOUSE ALL OPENED UP?
YOU GOT WHAT YOU WANTED
NOW GET YOUR ASS TO WORK BECAUSE TIME IS MONEY.
The walls are falling apart and stuff...
The house is ratty and old so they couldn't install air-conditioning.
Hehe, have a seat.
Are you even
Listening to me?!

SIT.
DAMMIT
WHAT'S UP WITH THIS HOUSE ANYWAY?
Aren't there no stairs and pieces of furniture old timer stuck to your piano legs?
NOW, WHENEVER I PLAY THE NEIGHBORS GET REALLY PISSED OFF
SEEMS I WAS BETTER OFF AT MY OLD PLACE
clang
you mean that can outside you call a coupe?
But yeah, I can imagine the neighbors would like to boot you a bomb
I BLEW MOST OF IT ON A CAR.
YOU'VE GOT MONEY, DON'T YOU? I DON'T SEE WHY—
NO, I MEANT A WOMAN

I CONSIDER EVERYTHING I LOVE MY LOVERS...
YEP. AND MUSIC TOO
OH RIGHT.
I FORGOT YOU HOLD PEOPLE AND MACHINE IN THE SAME REGARD
Drink up!
gulp
Hey! I already said not to drink!
I'm not gonna stand for a repeat of that night!
you, of all people, shouldn't drink!
I don't think I'm that irresponsible. In fact, I'm actually sure I'm more of the gentle side...
YOU KNOW, I SAW A FLICK ONCE IN IT, IT SAID, MEN WHO ARE GENTLE IN BED CAN'T BE CONSIDERED AS IRRESPONSIBLE
Sa...
I WASN'T GENTLE WITH YOU?
I'm sorry...
And why are we even talking about this???
Stop it already! We were both drunk off our asses
And you were so dead drunk, a car could've run over you and you'd never notice!
you're not just irresponsible, you're im-possible!

THAT'S ODD...
...I CLEARLY REMEMBER YOU CRYING THAT NIGHT
YOU DREAMT THAT UP
DID I REALLY?
I'M DEAD SURE I DIDN'T, THOUGH
BECAUSE I WAS PRETTY WIDE AWAKE THEN
SO YOU REALLY DID CRY
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS ANY-MORE
...I GUESS YOU DIDN'T DREAM IT UP, THEN

I SHOULDN'T HAVE DRANK WITH YOU THAT NIGHT
THAT NIGHT MIGHT'VE BEEN THE FIRST TIME WE EVER MET EACH OTHER.
BUT I'D ALREADY COME TO LIKE THIS NAKAGAWA MIKIHIKO PERSON A WHILE BEFORE.
WHY'D YOU STOP?
THE SONGS YOU WROTE ALL SEEM TO LEAVE A RELATIVELY LARGE PORTION OF THINGS UNSAID.
KEY-WORD BEING 'RELATIVELY.'
BUT IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO NOT HAVE THINGS WEIGHING DOWN ON YOUR MIND.
AND THEY'RE USUALLY SO SAD
EVEN I'M FEELING SORRY FOR ALL THE SONGS YOU WROTE
OH? I'M SORRY YOU'RE SORRY

That said,
I'll cheer as he sings!
I wrote a song especially for our reunion!!
strum strum
YOU'RE DEPRESSING ME EVEN FURTHER!
grab
Stop!
Hey
I
... DON'T EVER WANT TO HEAR ANOTHER SONG FROM YOU AGAIN
AND I NEVER WANTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN EITHER!
IF YOU DIDN'T EVER WANT TO SEE ME AGAIN, WHY'D YOU COMMISSION THE SONG?
THAT'S STRICTLY PROFESSIONAL
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE IT TO ANYONE, ESPECIALLY NOT SOMEONE WHO'S STILL GREEN
IF I DID THAT, MY CLIENT WILL REJECT THE WORK

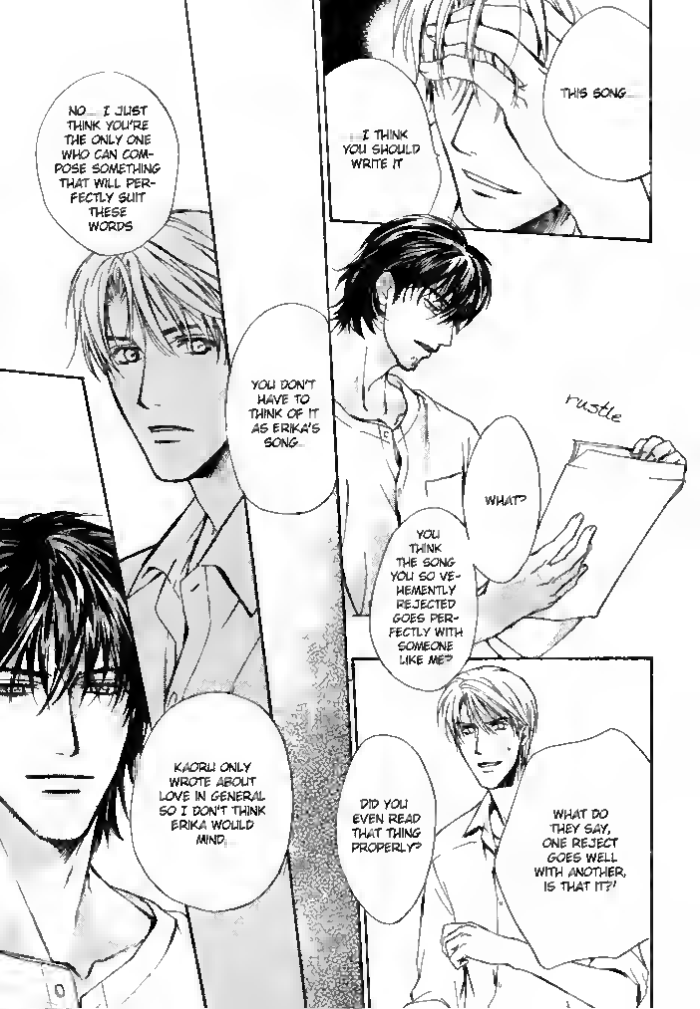
GREAT
HERE, THIS IS IT
WELL...
...SINCE YOU'VE ALREADY COME ALL THIS WAY, I MIGHT AS WELL TAKE A LOOK
JUST PUT SOME MUSIC TO THESE WORDS THAT'S ALL THE JOB ENTAILS
rustle
THAT'S RIGHT
...AND THE ONE SINGING THIS WILL BE AHARA ERIKA
LET ME SEE... THE CLIENT'S MIZUJIMA KAORU...
ERIKA'S SONGS— THEY'RE NOT BEAUTIFUL...
I'M SORRY BUT I CAN'T DO THIS
What ?!
YOU COULD'VE AT LEAST TAKEN SOME TIME TO THINK OVER IT...

I'M NOT CRITICIZING HER PARTICULARLY
HER MUSIC JUST DOESN'T DO MUCH FOR ME
WHERE THE HELL DO YOU GET OFF CRITICIZING HER?!
grab
YOU—!
I WON'T ATTEMPT THINGS I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO BELIEF IN
THEN JUST WRITE IT FOR THE PEOPLE HER MUSIC DOES A LOT FOR!
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN AFFORD TO BE PICKY!

IF ANYONE THINKS ILL OF ME DUE TO THIS I JUST LET THEM
BUT
DESPITE WHAT OTHERS MAY SAY,
ISN'T IT THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO CONDONE
DOING THINGS YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN?
SHUT UP
I'VE KNOWN FOR A WHILE NOW
—THAT YOU'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM.

YOU NEVER DO AS ASKED AND YOU DON'T COMPROMISE
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS PROFESSIONALISM DEAL,
YOU ACCEPT AND REJECT WORKS BASED ON YOUR WHIMS ALONE.
EVEN IF IT SOMETIMES MEANS YOU HAVE TO SCRAPE THE BOTTOM OF YOUR RICE COOKER TO REMAIN AS SUCH
BUT I ONLY DO THE THINGS THAT I CARE ABOUT DOING
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BRAT!
Ch-!
BUT SOMEHOW, YOU CAN ALWAYS GET AWAY WITH IT.
NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT YOU GET, PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS WILLING TO PUT UP WITH YOU.
BECAUSE PEOPLE LIKE YOU ARE HARD TO COME BY
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
DO YOU REALLY NEED ME TO SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU?

ALL I AM IS A PERSON WHO CARES ABOUT THINGS THAT ARE BEAUTIFUL ENOUGH TO MAKE ME BELIEVE IN THEM.
AND THAT'S WHAT I MEANT! YOU'RE WHAT THEY CALL A 'TRUE ARTIST,' AFTER ALL..
YOU WOULDN'T BE CONSI-DERED AS ONE OTHER-WISE
IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK AS WELL?
OR AM I MISTAKEN?
DOING THE THINGS ONLY YOU BELIEVE IN—
IF ONLY THE REST OF US HAVE THIS LUXURY—
AND YET,
PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO HAVE IT, PUT IT SO LIGHTLY...


THIS SONG...
...I THINK YOU SHOULD WRITE IT
NO... I JUST THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN COMPOSE SOMETHING THAT WILL PERFECTLY SUIT THESE WORDS
rustle
YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK OF IT AS ERIKA'S SONG...
WHAT?
YOU THINK THE SONG YOU SO VEHEMENTLY REJECTED GOES PERFECTLY WITH SOMEONE LIKE ME?
KAORU ONLY WROTE ABOUT LOVE IN GENERAL SO I DON'T THINK ERIKA WOULD MIND.
DID YOU EVEN READ THAT THING PROPERLY?
WHAT DO THEY SAY, ONE REJECT GOES WELL WITH ANOTHER, IS THAT IT?

Chapter 2 END

Makeinu no Nandemoya

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
DARKHEART510!

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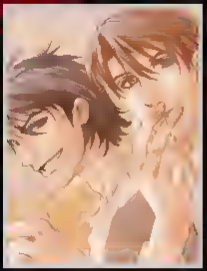
Makeinu no Nandemoya

Asou Kai & Sugano Akira



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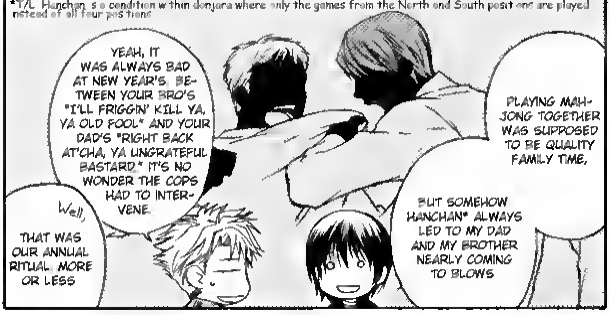
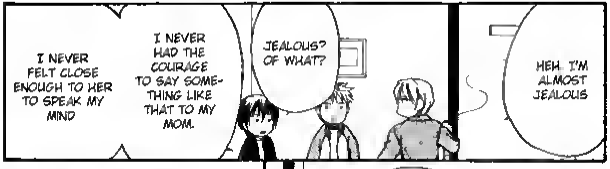
Jack-of-all-Trades
Chapter 3
by underdogs

Life dealt some of us a bad hand, and some of us got this way on our own. Regardless of how we got here, nowadays the three of us are quietly living out our days together.
We are people whose lives are at a stand-still.
PON! Here, lemme put them out.
YES. IT IS! YOU DIDN'T SAY "DONJARA" FIRST
SORRY, THAT MOVE'S INVALID.
NO. IT'S NOT.
YOU THINK I STILL SAY SHIT LIKE THAT AT MY AGE?
OH PLEASE. IF YOU'RE SO MATURE WHAT ARE YOU DOING PLAYING MAH-JONG IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?
Don't get me wrong. We're not "trying to get back on our feet," or some clichéd shit like that
We're just doing what we can with the cards we've been dealt
THIS IS PRECISELY WHY I SAY WE NEED AN ELECTRIC BOARD
THAT WAY, WE CAN...
MAN, YOU'RE STUBBORN.
No, no, and for the last time, NO!
OH, MY FAMILY'S HAD IT FOR AGES
WHERE'D THIS THING COME FROM ANYWAY?
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, WE'RE NOT EXACTLY RAKING IN THE DOUGH, AND IT'S BEEN LIKE THAT SINCE WE STARTED THIS OPERATION.

*Y/L Hanchan: a condition within dinjora where only the games from the North and South pesat are played instead of all four pais there


PLAYING MAH-JONG TOGETHER WAS SUPPOSED TO BE QUALITY FAMILY TIME,
BUT SOMEHOW HANCHAN* ALWAYS LED TO MY DAD AND MY BROTHER NEARLY COMING TO BLOWS
YEAH, IT WAS ALWAYS BAD AT NEW YEAR'S. BE-TWEEN YOUR BRO'S "I'LL FRIGGIN' KILL YA, YA OLD FOOL" AND YOUR DAD'S "RIGHT BACK AT'CHA, YA UNGRATEFUL BASTARD." IT'S NO WONDER THE COPS HAD TO INTER-VENE.
Well,
THAT WAS OUR ANNUAL RITUAL. MORE OR LESS


I NEVER FELT CLOSE ENOUGH TO HER TO SPEAK MY MIND
I NEVER HAD THE COURAGE TO SAY SOME-THING LIKE THAT TO MY MOM.
JEALOUS? OF WHAT?
HEH. I'M ALMOST JEALOUS

THINGS MIGHT'VE TURNED OUT BETTER IF I'D HAD THE GUTS TO SCREAM AT HER SOMETIMES
BUT, YOU KNOW... MY DAD AND MY BROTHER BASICALLY JUST IGNORED EACH OTHER RIGHT UP TO THE END
WELL,
YEAH, BUT THERE WAS STILL A BOND. WASN'T THERE?

BANG
BANG
I GUESS YOU HAVE A POINT
dwya-
dwya
Nooooooo~
THAT SOUND...
CRAAASH!
sound of braking
Hurried
ARE YOU TELLING US HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO STOP WITHOUT CRASHING INTO SOMETHING?
I-I think I'll hide upstairs-
Uh,
TELL HIM I'M OUT OR SOME-
BANG
Shuffle

Greetings my fair lover of one night! How fares thy lovely self this bright summer's noon?
Don't you dare call me that!
HAVE YOU FINALLY DECIDED TO TAKE THE JOB?
NOT AT ALL
NAKAGAWA SHOULD WRITE THIS HIMSELF
AND I SAID I'M NOT DOING IT.
I'm just returning this 'cause you forgot it!
He's just here to drop this off.
HEH. YOU SOUNDED LIKE A LIL' KID BACK THERE

glitter
grip
IN THAT CASE,
LET US GO IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT SOUND!
What the
Whoa-
What d'you think you're doing?!
It's like a scene from a musical
Captive audience.
S-SEARCH HOW?
WHY, IN MY CAR, OF COURSE.
E-
ENOUGH with the jokes!
Leggo! I'd rather die than get in that—
No, wait, I WILL die if I get in that clunker!
pop

I said, leggo, you son of a-
GRAB
Come, let us go for a drive!
Aarghhh!
Now now don't thrash around. That's not very ladylike you know!
Lemme down, you big oaf!
I'm gonna die!
Skr
Skr
Oof!
WHOA, YOU'RE HEAVIER THAN I EXPECTED
why're you two idiots just sitting there, watching? help me already!

WE'RE SORRY, MIKI-CHAN,
BUT NOT EVEN OUR LOVE FOR YOU WILL MAKE US GO NEAR HIS CAR
OUR LIVES MAY NOT BE WORTH MUCH, BUT WE DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THIS WORLD YET, YOU KNOW?
I'LL COME BACK AS A GHOST AND HAUNT YOUR PUNY LIL' ASSES!
ALTHOUGH SHE HASN'T PASSED INSPECTION I STILL LOVE HER LIKE ALL LOVELY LADIES DESERVE TO BE LOVED
I TAKE VERY GOOD EARE OF HER.
Hasn't passed inspection Unfit for the road
clack
rattle
Vroooom
Didn't you hear me? I said leggooo!
thud
Heh, heh
I PRAY FOR YOUR SAFE RETURN, NAKAGAWA-SAN
HAHA, WHO WOULD'VE GUESSED THOSE WOULD BE HIS LAST WORDS

daaazed
SERIOUSLY THOUGH, I FEEL MIKI-CHAN NEEDS THAT SORTA ROUGH TREATMENT ONCE IN A WHILE
HM, YOU COULD BE RIGHT...
WHAT, IT DOESN'T SIT WELL WITH YOU?
NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT.
THEN WHAT IS IT?
YOU LOOK DE-PRESSED
HM.
IT'S JUST WHAT NAKAGAWA-SAN SAID BROUGHT BACK SOME MEMO-RIES ABOUT MY DAD THAT'S ALL
I'VE NEVER...
TOLD ANYONE ABOUT THIS BUT...
YEAH? WHAT IS IT?
WELL...

AT THE END
GO ON I'M LIS-TENIN'
HE WAS DELIRIOUS MOST OF THE TIME BUT HE KEPT SAYING HE WANTED TO FIND MY BROTHER,
THAT HE WANTED MY BROTHER TO TAKE OVER THE FAMILY BUSINESS,
AND THAT HE WANTED TO SEE HIM.
BECAUSE THERE WERE A LOT OF THINGS HE STILL NEEDED TO SAY

EVEN THOUGH MY BROTHER HARDLY EVER TALKED TO DAD, AND THEN ONLY TO YELL AT HIM,
DAD STILL DESPERATELY HELD ON SAYING MY BROTHER HAD THINGS HE NEEDED TO SAY TO HIM AS WELL. WHEN I WAS ALONE WITH HIM, THAT'S ALL HE EVER SAID
HE CRIED, TOO

SOME-
TIMES...
OH...
...I WONDERED IF THERE'S ANY REASON FOR ME TO KEEP BREATHING
Atsushi!
I COULDN'T HELP IT. IT WAS A BAD SITUATION
And I only thought about it a little.
BUT NOW...
Huh?
NOW I FEEL LIKE I'VE FOUND WHAT I'M MEANT TO DO

THEY'RE MUNDANE TASKS AND ALL. BUT SCRUBBING TILES UNTIL THEY'RE SPOTLESS. AND LOOKING FOR MISSING PETS...
WELL, IT'S TOUGH WHEN WE CAN'T FIND THEM, BUT THINGS LIKE HELPING THE ELDERLY, AND SEEING THEIR GRATEFUL FACES AFTERWARDS...
YOU KNOW, FOR ME...
FOR ME, THAT'S ENOUGH TO GIVE MEANING TO MY LIFE
I SEE.
IT'S ENOUGH
OR MAYBE PEOPLE WERE JUST BEING KIND, AND WANTED TO MAKE ME FEEL LIKE I DESERVE A PLACE IN THIS WORLD?
YOU'RE AN IDIOT
HUH?! WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
I ADMIT SEEING THAT MUSICAL-ESQUE SCENE BACK THERE MADE ME FEEL LIKE MY OWN LIFE IS ROUTINE AND COLORLESS IN COMPARISON,
BUT IF BEING SPECIAL MEANS BEING LIKE THOSE TWO, I'D RATHER STICK TO THIS BORING OL' LIFE OF MINE.
Thank you very much.

HEH. I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT
DAMN STRAIGHT
SO WHO DO PEOPLE USUALLY THANK FOR GIVING THEM NORMAL LIVES? THEIR FOLKS?
Name
YEAH, THANKING MY FOLKS SOUNDS RIGHT. MOM, DAD, YOU HAVE MY ETERNAL GRATITUDE.
AREN'T BOTH YOUR PARENTS ALIVE?
I'M GONNA DIIIIIIII-IIIIIII-EEE!
Vroooooooom
My life... is flash-ing...
Vroom
Just 'cause some might say what I'm doing now can't be considered living, doesn't mean I want to die.
So, pleeeease lemme out already!
WELL, THAT'S A ROUND-ABOUT WAY OF SAYING IT.

I DON'T WANT TO DIE
Ohhh, that's good to know! Now, let us sing a song about how good it is to be alive!
HOW YOU LIVED PAST CHILDHOOD IS BEYOND ME
RUSTLE
W-
WE'VE STOPPED?
Huh?
Where are we?!
Hahaha!
YOU SURE DO GET ANGRY A LOT
Yoooan
Mountain?
HM, WE CAME ALL THIS WAY WITHOUT A NAVIGATION SYSTEM
WHERE ARE WE INDEED? I SEE A BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAIN BEFORE US, SO I'D SAY THAT'S WHERE WE ARE!
where in god's name have you brought us?!
AND WHY DID YOUR RUST BUCKET CAR HAVE TO BREAK DOWN HERE OF ALL PLACES? THERE ISN'T ANOTHER CAR IN SIGHT

BEING WITH YOU DOES THINGS TO MY SANITY.
SAME HERE.
IT'S NOT OFTEN YOU MEET SOMEONE SPECIAL
I'D TREASURE THIS TIME, IF I WERE YOU
I'M DOING FINE ON MY OWN
HEH SURE YOU ARE
Tweeeeeeeeeet
chirp
chirp
WELL, SINCE WE'RE HERE, HAVE A LISTEN...
IT'S THE BEST KIND OF MUSIC THE WORLD HAS TO OFFER.

A PROFESSOR AT MY MUSIC COLLEGE TOLD ME ONCE, "NEVER MIX NATURE'S SOUNDS WITH ENGINEERED SOUND."
IF YOU ASK ME, THAT'S JUST NONSENSE. IT'S NOT EVEN A REAL THEORY. BEAUTY DOESN'T NEED EXPLANATION OR JUSTIFICATION.
YET, I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO THINK THAT WAY MYSELF.
I CAN'T SIMPLY ADMIT—
—A BEAUTIFUL THING IS JUST THAT BEAUTIFUL.
WHAT ABOUT THE THINGS YOU LOVE?
YOUR POOR, BEAUTIFUL, NEGLECTED TALENT...
I HAVE ZERO LOVE FOR YOU. ZIP. ZILCH. NADA.
I MEANT YOUR MUSIC.
"MY HEART, SO SCARRED LIKE A WOUND THAT WON'T STOP BLEEDING."
"IT SHALL ACHE FOREVERMORE."

I KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT. "IMPRISONED DEEP INSIDE,"
"THESE FEELINGS YEARNING TO BE VOICED " THAT'S IT, RIGHT? WELL, JUST SAVE IT
DON'T YOU DARE MAKE IT INTO POETRY I WON'T BE MOCKED BY YOU
I'M NOT WRITING ANYMORE I WON'T LOVE AGAIN, EITHER
MY ATTEMPTS NEVER CAME TO ANYTHING BUT FODDER FOR OTHER PEOPLE S JOKES
SO, NEVER AGAIN
NOT TEN YEARS FROM NOW, OR TWENTY NEVER.
I DON'T PLAN TO BE ALIVE ALL THAT LONG ANYWAY
LISTEN TO YOU. YOU RE TALKING LIKE A CHILD
AND A VERY YOUNG ONE AT THAT
I'M WELL AND TRULY AMAZED

MY GUESS IS YOU HAVE A LONG LIFE AHEAD OF YOU.
YEAH? HOW'D YOU FIGURE?
THAT'S HOW THE CURSE WORKS.
IF YOU CAN'T FIGURE OUT THE PROBLEM NOW YOU'LL BE GIVEN ANOTHER HUNDRED YEARS TO WORK ON IT
"A HUNDRED YEARS? ALL ALONE?"
"WITH NO ONE TO SHARE THEM WITH?"
WHAT DOES IT MATTER TO YOU ANYWAY?
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO LET ANYONE IN
YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE THAT'S A BAD THING

IN THIS WORLD THERE ARE PEOPLE WHOSE TALENTS GO UNRECOGNIZED. PEOPLE WHO CAN'T FORGIVE THEMSELVES...
FOR THINGS THEY CAN'T CHANGE AND EVEN PEOPLE WHO WILL NEVER BE APPRECIATED FOR WHO THEY ARE
YET THEY GO ON LIVING
AND THEY LOVE.
THEY MEET NEW PEOPLE
THEY CRY
SO, PLEASE,
DO THE NATURAL THING.
THAT'S NORMAL NATURAL
AND IT'S ALL RIGHT CAUSE WE'RE ALL HUMAN

tap
tap
SO, WHY ARE WE STILL DOING THIS?
'CAUSE I HAVE THIS NAGGING FEELING THERE'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT ABOUT TODAY
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE WORD "IMPORTANT" DOESN'T FIGURE IN OUR LIVES AT ALL
RIGHT, NAKAGAWA-SAN?
HM?
UH, YEAH - YEAH
That's right.
NO WORK TO DO
LATELY WE'VE HAD NO JOBS AT ALL. CAN WE REALLY AFFORD TO JUST FRITTER AWAY OUR DAYS PLAYING MAHJONG?
creak
I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE THIS IS ANYTHING NEW WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS
dejected
Ah.
TODAY'S DATE IS CIRCLED IN RED. SEE? TOLD YA WE'RE FORGETTING SOMETHIN'
BUT WHAT?

rattle
gasp
Um,
I THINK I'LL GO DISTRIBUTE SOME FLYERS
AH!
WHAT'S WITH YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?
CLICK
CLICK
SLAP
Uwaa!
I'm coming too!
Leave some of those flyers for me!
rattle
What've you guys going on about?
WE'RE
HEY, WHAT AREN'T YOU GUYS TELLING ME?
WE'RE TOO LATE
TIME'S UP, BOYS!
IT'S FRIDAY, SO HAND IT OVER

Sneak
Eek!
GRAB
OVER MY DEAD BODY
Ah!
WHA-?! THAT'S TODAY?!
YOU GUYS WEREN'T THINKING OF RUNNING OUT ON ME, WERE YOU? 'CAUSE THAT'S JUST WRONG
TOSS
ACK!
GREETINGS
WHAT KIND OF A GREETING IS THAT?!
AND WOULD YOU QUIT MANHANDLING PEOPLE ALREADY? IT'S NOT LADYLIKE!
WELL, I WOULDN'T HAVE TO IF CERTAIN PEOPLE WERE MAN ENOUGH TO FACE ME
WHO ARE YOU TO TALK ABOUT GENDER STEREOTYPES, YOU... YOU MAN-WOMAN YOU!
I'M SICK OF TRYING TO DEAL WITH YOU MEN IN ANY OTHER WAY. THIS GETS THE JOB DONE

Can I take that as a no?
If it isn't done,
SLAM
YOU THREE CAN KISS YOUR LITTLE THINGIES GOODBYE
NOW NOW, NO NEED TO GET VIOLENT
Quiver! Beg! Weep!
Can you compensate for damages incurred due to delayed sales? Huuuuhh?!
Speak up now!
As someone who used to be an industry professional, you must understand how important deadlines are

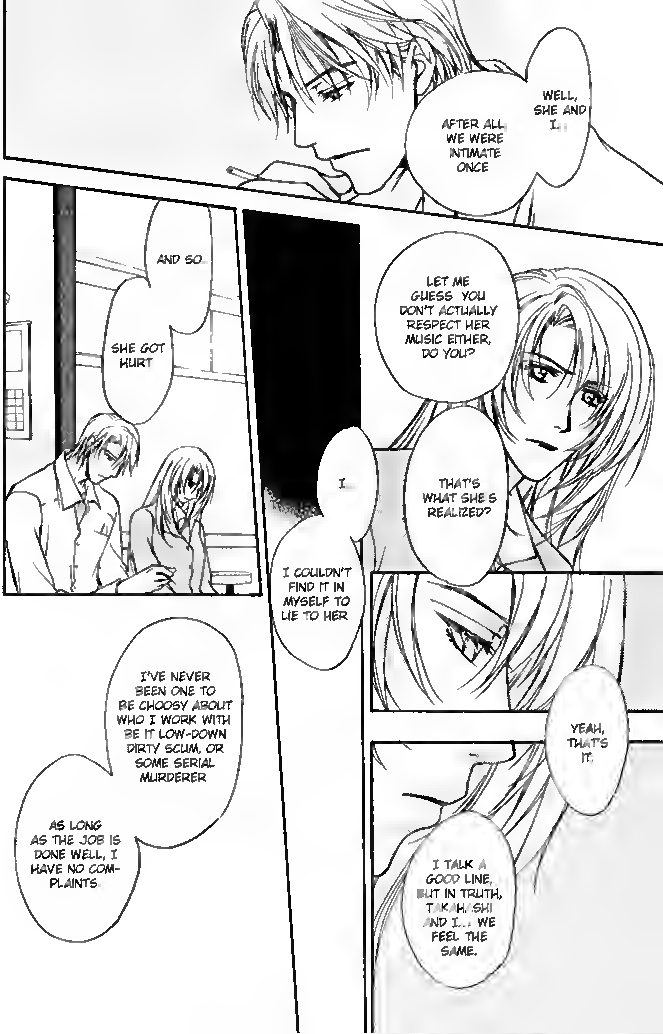
W-WAIT
JUST WAIT A SECOND
WE'VE ALREADY ASKED TAKAHASHI RYOUICHI TO DO IT. WE JUST HAVE TO GET PAST HIS WHIMSICAL STREAK
...You!

IT'S NOT A HINT ANYMORE WHEN YOU SAY IT OUT LOUD, M'DEAR.
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO HELP YOU AND YOU STILL CAN'T TAKE A HINT? ARGH!
AND HERE I WAS HOPING MY WORDS WOULD PROPEL YOU TO PEN SOMETHING AND THUS INITIATE YOUR COMEBACK ON THE JAPANESE MUSIC SCENE.
AND BESIDES,
BESIDES
I'VE ALREADY MADE UP MY MIND
I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT, BUT NO IS NO
GEEZ
thud
QUICK! NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO MAKE A FAST GETAWAY TO THE KITCHEN!
Hello? Atsushi? Are you alive?
SO THEY'RE PLANNING TO LEAVE ME OUT HERE ALL ALONE HUH?
DID HE LOOK AT IT?
HE DID.

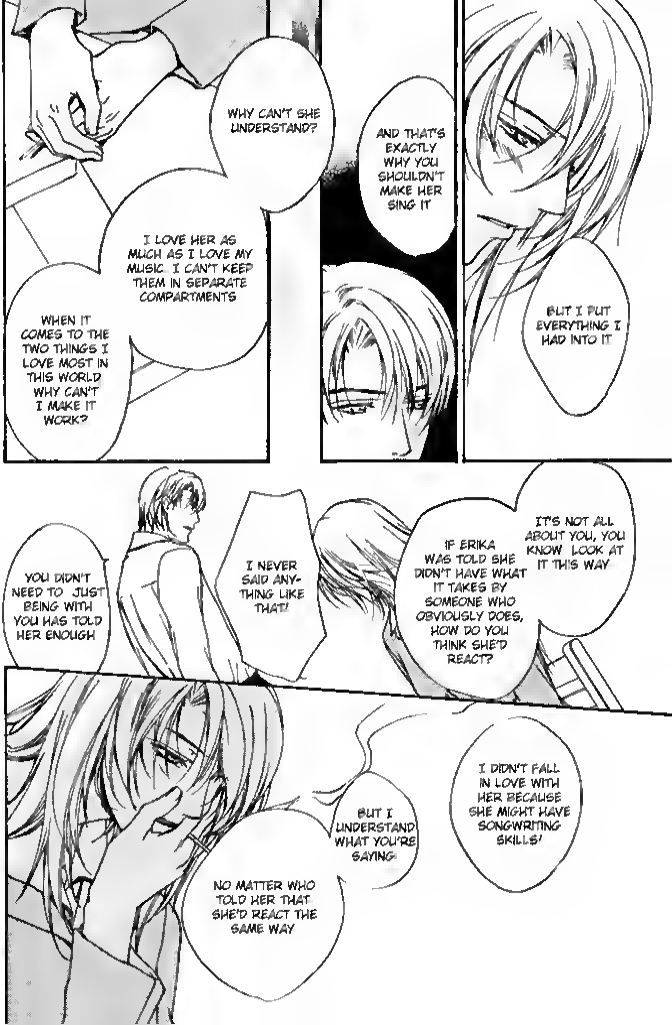
AND? WHAT DID HE SAY?
I'M AFRAID THAT'S CONFIDENTIAL
MEANING HE SAID SOMETHING YOU DON'T FEEL SAFE REPEATING TO ME.
IT WASN'T ABOUT YOU
WELL, THEN...
WAS IT ABOUT ERIKA?
UM, WELL...
I CAN GUESS WHAT HE SAID
BUT TELL ME ANYWAY
I DON'T THINK IT'S MY PLACE TO...
I GET IT, ALL RIGHT? I SAID IT'S FINE
SO OUT WITH IT.
HE SAID... ERIKA'S SONGS ARE TASTELESS...
...AND HE CAN'T WRITE FOR HER
THAT ^/@$*! I'LL HAVE HIS HEAD ON A PIKE!
RATTLE
I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD YOU
BUT...

I WASN'T ABLE TO GIVE HER THE LOVE SHE DESERVED NOT LIKE YOU DO
MAYBE IT'S NOT SUCH A BAD THING THAT SHE ENDED UP WITH YOU, AFTER ALL
She used to be my Erika... Funny the way things work out sometimes
I DON'T CARE IF HE INSULTS ME BUT HE CAN'T INSULT MY DARLING BRIKA!
THINGS AREN'T REALLY GOING AS WELL AS I'VE MADE OUT...
rattle
THAT'S...
THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL
WOULD YOU PLEASE STOP THAT? HOW'D I END UP LIKE THIS ANYWAY?
WHAT? I CAN PAY FOR THE SERVICE, YA KNOW
Is this or is this not a convenience agency?
WHACK
WHACK
HOLD IT.
I MAY BE A GOOD GUY AT HEART BUT I'M NOT SO GOOD THAT I WANT TO LISTEN TO MY FIRST WIFE TALK ABOUT HER RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS WITH MY SECOND WIFE

IT'S SAD, YOU KNOW? I'M SURE MY PARENTS NEVER IMAGINED I'D FALL SO FAR. IF THEY SAW ME AS I AM TODAY I BET EVEN THAT WOMAN I CALL "MOTHER" WOULD WEEP
what are you muttering about?
ERIKA, SHE...
SHE'S STARTING TO DOUBT MY FEELINGS.
WHAT? DID YOU CHEAT ON HER OR SOMETHING?
THAT'S AN UNUSUAL RESPONSE FOR YOU
THAT'S NOT IT
OH, I SEE
WHAT I MEAN IS SHE'S STARTING TO REALIZE.


WELL, SHE AND I...
AFTER ALL WE WERE INTIMATE ONCE
LET ME GUESS. YOU DON'T ACTUALLY RESPECT HER MUSIC EITHER, DO YOU?
THAT'S WHAT SHE'S REALIZED?
I...
I COULDN'T FIND IT IN MYSELF TO LIE TO HER
AND SO...
SHE GOT HURT
I'VE NEVER BEEN ONE TO BE CHOOSY ABOUT WHO I WORK WITH BE IT LOW-DOWN DIRTY SCUM, OR SOME SERIAL MURDERER
AS LONG AS THE JOB IS DONE WELL, I HAVE NO COMPLAINTS.
YEAH, THAT'S IT.
I TALK A GOOD LINE. BUT IN TRUTH, TAKUSHI AND I... WE FEEL THE SAME.

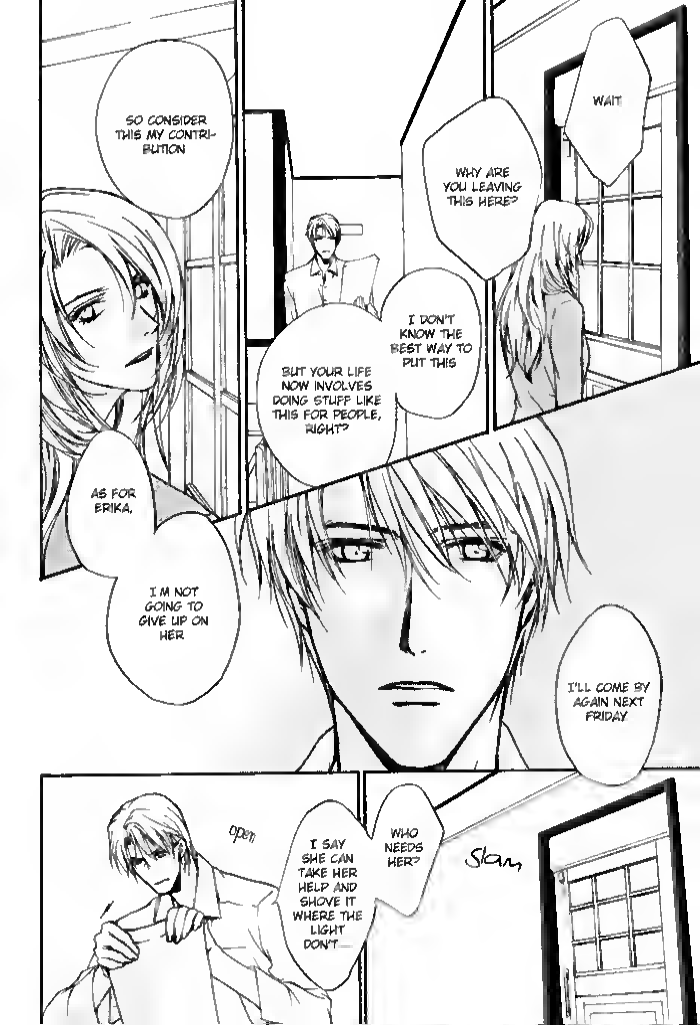
YET SOME-HOW,
I COULDN'T PRETEND WITH HER
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH IT HURTS HER,
IT'S JUST...
"I LOVE YOUR MUSIC."
I CAN'T SAY IT BECAUSE IT ISN'T TRUE.
WHY NOT?
TRUST ME IT WOULD BE LIKE RUBBING SALT IN THE WOUND...
THEN, THIS SONG...
I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD GIVE IT TO HER
tap


WHY CAN'T SHE UNDERSTAND?
I LOVE HER AS MUCH AS I LOVE MY MUSIC. I CAN'T KEEP THEM IN SEPARATE COMPARTMENTS
WHEN IT COMES TO THE TWO THINGS I LOVE MOST IN THIS WORLD WHY CAN'T I MAKE IT WORK?
AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHY YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE HER SING IT
BUT I PUT EVERYTHING I HAD INTO IT
IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW. LOOK AT IT THIS WAY
IF ERIKA WAS TOLD SHE DIDN'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES BY SOMEONE WHO OBVIOUSLY DOES, HOW DO YOU THINK SHE'D REACT?
I NEVER SAID ANY-THING LIKE THAT!
YOU DIDN'T NEED TO. JUST BEING WITH YOU HAS TOLD HER ENOUGH
I DIDN'T FALL IN LOVE WITH HER BECAUSE SHE MIGHT HAVE SONGWRITING SKILLS!
BUT I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.
NO MATTER WHO TOLD HER THAT SHE'D REACT THE SAME WAY

THERE WAS A PERIOD WHEN I DESPISED WHAT I WAS DOING
OF COURSE NO ONE DOES REALLY. NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF FALSE FRONT PEOPLE PUT UP, THEY CAN'T LIE TO THEMSELVES
SHE DOESN'T TAKE CRITICISM VERY WELL.
IT'S JUST THAT SOME OF US CHOOSE TO DEAL WITH IT BY RUNNING AWAY.
IS THAT WHY YOU QUIT?
BECAUSE YOU'RE RUNNING AWAY?
CORRECT.
THEN, MAYBE AS A SORT OF PUNISHMENT, THINGS JUST MOVED ON WITHOUT ME
THERE'S REALLY NO GOING BACK FOR ME.

I KNEW YOU WERE SUFFERING...
I DID LOVE YOU, YOU KNOW
OF COURSE I DON'T MEAN IN THE ROMANTIC SENSE, BUT...
I KIND OF HALF-EXPECTED THINGS WOULD TURN OUT THE WAY THEY DID
I WANTED TO REACH OUT TO YOU
PRINCE?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU KNOW. YOU'RE LIKE ONE OF THOSE LITTLE GIRLS WHO STILL BELIEVE IN FAIRYTALES... BELIEVING ONE DAY HER PRINCE WILL COME.
I SUPPOSE IT WOULDN'T HAVE DONE ANY GOOD

WELL, YOU KNOW HOW LITTLE GIRLS LIKE TO IMAGINE THEY'RE PRINCESSES WAITING FOR THEIR PRINCES IT'S VERY COMMON
BUT THEY LEAVE THAT BEHIND WHEN THEY GROW UP.
IT'S ONLY PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO ARE STILL WAITING
OF COURSE, I'M USING "PRINCE" AS AN ANALOGY
I MEAN YOU'RE WAITING FOR SOMEONE OR SOMETHING THAT WILL COME FROM NOWHERE AND RESCUE YOU FROM WHATEVER IT IS YOU NEED RESCUING FROM. THE PROVERBIAL KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR
WOMEN UNDERSTAND THERE'S REALLY NO SUCH THING. AT LEAST, YOU'LL NEVER FIND IT IF YOU JUST SIT STILL AND WAIT FOR IT TO COME TO YOU.
I GUESS I'M TRYING TO SAY...
MOVE ON WITH YOUR LIFE. BECAUSE NO ONE WILL CHANGE IT FOR YOU
thud


SO CONSIDER THIS MY CONTRIBUTION
WAIT
WHY ARE YOU LEAVING THIS HERE?
I DON'T KNOW THE BEST WAY TO PUT THIS
BUT YOUR LIFE NOW INVOLVES DOING STUFF LIKE THIS FOR PEOPLE, RIGHT?
AS FOR ERIKA,
I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE UP ON HER
I'LL COME BY AGAIN NEXT FRIDAY
open
I SAY SHE CAN TAKE HER HELP AND SHOVE IT WHERE THE LIGHT DON'T
WHO NEEDS HER?
Slam

PRINCE, HAH!
THAT'S THE STUPIDEST ANALOGY I'VE EVER HEARD.
IF THERE WAS SUCH A THING
LET'S WAIT 'TIL THE COAST IS REALLY CLEAR
UH-HUH. HER WORDS ALONE COULD DO IT. I THINK I DID ALMOST DIE BACK THERE, THE WAY THEY PIERCED THROUGH ME
YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE WHAT SHE SAID TO HEART. YOU'RE TRYING HARD ENOUGH AS IT IS
YEAH. SHE'S ONE SCARY LADY. I BET SHE COULD KILL US WITHOUT USING A WEAPON
YOU KNOW
YOU SHOULD THINK A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY BEFORE YOU SAY IT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? I MEANT EVERY WORD.
THAT'S JUST IT. I'M NOT TRYING AT ALL.

Their Erika... It's not Aihara Erika, is it? Not that Erika?!
The super-cute idol?!
She's Mk-chan's second wife?
Like
Um, don't tell me you're only getting that now?
No way, man!
I KNOW,
YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO BE NICE, SINCE YOU'RE A NICE GUY AND ALL
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND
NOT AT ALL
GOD KNOWS THERE AREN'T ENOUGH PEOPLE LIKE YOU AROUND
Well
I DON'T KNOW WHO SHE IS OR WHERE SHE'S FROM,
Nothing we can do about it, anyway
BUT HERE'S WISHING ERIKA ALL THE HAPPI-NESS SHE DE-SERVES
HANG ON A SECOND...
LOOM
ACK!
Ah! MY IHY has been sullied?!
Kaoru-sama and Erika-chan, together! Oh, the horror!
sob
Nooo Not Erika-chan
WHOA, TORA-CHAN! SHH! YOU'RE TOO LOUD!
YOU, LITTLE
Erika-chan... Naaa
sob

第3回☆END

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TRANSLATORS
(Japanese to English)
and
EDITORS
for our team.
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Makeinu no Nandemoya

Asou Kai & Sugano Akira

Volume 1 : Chapter 4

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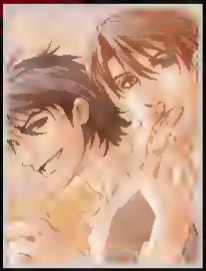

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Convenience
Agency
Chapter 4
by underdogs

IT'S SO QUIET HERE AT NIGHT
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S A BACK ALLEY
I AM SURPRISED THERE ARE SO MANY OLD HOUSES, THOUGH
WELL, OUR PLACE IS PRETTY MUCH THE SAME

SO WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO HELP OUT ALL OF A SUDDEN
THOUGH YOU DON'T REALLY SEEM INTO IT
Proudly
I CAUGHT IT, DIDN'T I?
THE CAT
yip
THIS CAT RUNS AWAY CONSTANTLY. DOESN'T THAT MEAN HE DISLIKES HIS OWNER?
WE SHOULD TAKE HIM IN AT THE OFFICE
NAKAGAWA-SAN,

YOU'RE AN ADULT COULD YOU PLEASE ACT YOUR AGE A LITTLE MORE?
For example, this right here
DOES HE LOOK LIKE A CAT TO YOU?
YIP
DOGS ARE BIG AND CATS ARE SMALL. THAT'S WHAT MY MOM TAUGHT ME WHEN I WAS A KID.
YOU NEVER SANG "THE DOG PATROLLER" SONG?
I WAS A CHILD WHO ABSORBED EVERYTHING MY MOTHER TOLD ME
DIDN'T ANYONE TEACH YOU THE SOUNDS THEY MAKE?
WELL I HAVE HEARD THAT THE GIFTED ONES ARE USUALLY UNBALANCED
Seems like common sense was replaced with talent.
HOW SAD
AND THEY'RE NOT EVEN AWARE OF IT.
AH.

Fight
Clang
Ran
Ran
ISN'T THAT TORA-SAN?
GEEZ HE DIDN'T EVEN SEARCH
Clang
Fight!
LET'S HAVE
"YAKINIKU" TODAY
WHAT'S HE STARING AT?
A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL FIELD?
WAIT, THE CAT
I MEAN THE DOG— JUST BECAUSE WE FOUND IT DOESN'T MEAN
*GRILLED MEAT
I
IN THE END, I DO LIKE THE LIFE I HAVE RIGHT NOW.
IT WOULDN'T BE SO BAD TO LIVE AND HANG OUT WITH YOU GUYS FOREVER

NAKAGAWA-SAN
TORAJIROU, HE.
HM?
HE SAID
THAT IF LIES PILE UP LITTLE BY LITTLE,
THEN SOMEDAY, EVERYTHING MIGHT END UP BEING A LIE
THEN HOW ABOUT COMPOSING A SONG FOR THESE LYRICS?
YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT AS WELL, HUH?
I'M NOT LYING
BECAUSE...
THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE DEPENDING ON YOU AREN'T THERE?
DIDN'T KAORU-ONEESAMA SAY THAT THE FACT THAT PEOPLE ARE GIVING YOU THEIR HELP IS PROOF THAT YOUR WORK IS WORTH SOMETHING?

SINCE WHEN ARE YOU KAORU'S CHEERLEADER?
KAORU-ONEESAMA IS GREAT
SHE'S EVEN BRAINWASHED YOU
IT WOULD BE AMAZING TO BE ABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT TELLING LIES...
BE-CAUSE,
...I'M SURE THAT LIVING SUCH A LIFE...
...WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT
LIES...
AH!
No!
THAT WOMAN! NOT ONLY DID SHE USE HER BEAUTY AND FIGURE TO LURE ME, AT ONLY 22, TO FALL HEAD OVER HEELS FOR HER,
SHE ALSO PLAYED THE "NO TOUCHING BEFORE MARRIAGE" TRICK ON ME. WE FINALLY REGISTERED AFTER A HUGE WEDDING RECEPTION, BUT THE VERY NEXT DAY, SHE RAN OFF TO MAUI WITH ANOTHER WOMAN!
Write

WELL,
IT'S PARTIALLY YOUR FAULT FOR BEING TRICKED SO EASILY.
I'M SORRY
ARE YOU ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO THINKS THE VICTIM IS ALWAYS AT FAULT?
Haha
WELL YOUR IMAGE HAS COLLAPSED RECENTLY, NAKAGAWA-SAN.
BUT I THINK THAT'S A GOOD THING
TORAJIROU THINKS SO AS WELL
WHAT IS?
I...
...LOVE THE WAY WE'RE LIVING
...RIGHT NOW.

EVEN WHEN WE'RE WORKING,
IT'S LIKE WE'RE JUST HAVING FUN TOGETHER
IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE ON A NEVER-ENDING SUMMER HOLIDAY
I'LL PROBABLY STAY HERE FOREVER, SO,
NAKAGAWA-SAN
IT'S OKAY
FOR YOU TO LEAVE US FOR A WHILE
LEAVE
FOR A WHILE?

YOU GUYS FOUND IT?!
AYAYA-CHAN! YOU RUN AWAY TOO MUCH THAT'S NOT GOOD
yip
yip
yip
HE THINKS YOU'RE SCARY BECAUSE YOU'RE HUGE
Scary, because I'm huge?
DIDN'T ANYONE EVER TELL YOU NOT TO MAKE FUN OF SOMEONE'S PHYSICAL DEFECTS?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "DEFECTS"?
I STILL REMEMBER!
WHEN WE WERE LITTLE YOU KEPT CALLING ME SHORT AND ASKING WHEN I'D GROW UP

I DON'T NEED SOMEONE WHO WAS CALLED A "ONE NIGHT LOVER" BY A FUNNY, HANDSOME GUY TO TELL ME THINGS LIKE THAT.
THAT TOPIC IS FORBIDDEN!
SO, TORA-SAN LIKES TO PICK ON THE PERSON HE LIKES, HUH?
YOU KNOW,
YOU SHOULD TALK TO THAT HANDSOME WEIRDO SOME MORE
HE'S AN ARTIST WHO CAN'T UNDERSTAND HALF OF WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING
HE CAN'T DO ANYTHING PROPERLY APART FROM MUSIC
HE CAN'T DRIVE, NOR CAN HE FILL OUT AN INCOME TAX FORM.
IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU CAN DO?
I FOUND THE CAT TODAY
yap
I TOLD YOU, IT'S A DOG

YOU KNOW MIKI-CHAN
IT'S NOT US
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THE PERSON WHO THINKS ABOUT YOU...
...AND THE PERSON WHO THINKS FOR YOU...
BECAUSE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE NICEST TO YOU...
THEY AREN'T EITHER OF US
...ARE NOT THE ONES WHO WILL TRULY SAVE YOU

YEAH, KINDA
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING TO HIM, TOO?
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU TWO ALL OF A SUDDEN?
Don't sit there
Ah
DON'T SULK
LET'S GO HAVE YAKINIKU
Okay?
WE'LL HAVE COW'S TONGUE BEEF RIBS AND BEER AND CHEER RIGHT UP
Depressed
YOU'RE NOT A KID ANYMORE
Geez
OH, THAT SOUNDS NICE LET'S GET SKIRT STEAK AND BIBIMBAP,* TOO
*KOREAN RICE DISH MIXED WITH BEEF, EGGS, VEGETABLES AND CHILI
Ha ha
Pout
I'LL SEE TAKAHASHI AGAIN OVER MY DEAD BODY.
I NEVER SAID I WAS REFERRING TO THAT HANDSOME WEIRDO.

BESIDES, KAORU-SAMA IS COMING ON FRIDAY
OUR OFFICE MAY GET BURNED DOWN
Tremble tremble
IF THE SONG ISN'T FINISHED IN TIME WE'LL REALLY BE IN TROUBLE
JUST LIKE IN THAT COWBOY MOVIE LAST NIGHT
I CAN SEE KAORU-ONEESAMA DOING IT
Fight!
clang
Fight!
SOME-HOW,
THE REVIVAL SPELL IS YAKINIKU
I'VE LOST THE WILL TO LIVE
YA-
Yeah! Let's have yakiniku and cheer up!
Yaki-niku!
spell
YAKI-NIKU
YOU GUYS JUST WANT SOME YAKINIKU, DON'T YOU?

ISN'T IT BECAUSE WE DIDN'T REFUSE IT, EITHER?
sigh
Two more days...
BOSS, LET'S GO SEE TAKAHASHI-SAN
I DON'T WANT THE PLACE WHERE I WAS BORN AND RAISED TO BE BURNED DOWN.
TWO MORE DAYS 'TIL FRIDAY...
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT I NEVER ACCEPTED THE JOB. WHY DO WE HAVE TO SUFFER FROM THIS UNREASONABLE HORROR?
RUMBLE
A CAR?!
GRAB
stands

SO IT'S ACTUALLY SAFER IF YOU TALK HERE.
WHA
HE'LL CATCH YOU AND SHOVE YOU IN HIS CAR. THEN HE'LL PROBABLY SAY, "LETS GO FIND THE MUSIC!"
clang
EVEN IF YOU RUN AWAY,
YOU JUST ATE MEAT. YOU CAN'T RUN OFF AND LEAVE US WITH THE BILL
Let go of me, Tora-san!
what are you doing?! Let me go!
POLICEMEN THESE DAYS ARE SO UNRELIABLE.
Hold still
rattle
UNRE-LIEVABLY, THEY'RE AN UNREDEEMED PLEDGE
rattle
what is that? why do you have hand-cuffs?
SNAP
Grip
I've always wanted to try this!
Arrested at 12:25!

*A PASTA DISH WITH TOMATO SAUCE

*MAHJONG USING BANDAI CHARACTERS

I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW TO PLAY
No worries.
IT'S EASY TO LEARN IT'S ABOUT TIME WE PLAYED WITH 4 PEOPLE
The game ends too quickly when it's just the three of us.
DON'T JUST CASUALLY SIT DOWN! AND DON'T BE SO FRIENDLY WITH EACH OTHER
YOU KNOW, I WAS ACTUALLY PLANNING TO INVITE YOU OUT FOR A DRIVE TODAY.
GUESS I SHOULD THANK THESE HANDCUFFS THEN
I'M NOT GOING...
clank
WHY WOULD YOU GROW SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I DIDN'T GROW IT.
SHOULD I CUT IT OFF FOR YOU?
Clank clank
IT WOULDN'T BOTHER ME IF NAKAGAWA MIKIHIKO WERE MISSING AN ARM.
It'd bother me!
I WONDER WHY YOU DIDN'T THINK TO CUT OFF THE HANDCUFFS RATHER THAN AN ARM...

Touch
AS LONG AS YOU HAVE EARS...
EVEN THOUGH I WANTED TO SEE YOU,
YOU HID YOURSELF FROM ME FOR A YEAR...
I'LL LOVE YOU SOMEHOW
what kind of nonsense is this? why do you concern yourself with me?!
clatter
don't touch my ears!
Tremble

BY HIRING A DETECTIVE,
OR ASKING AT THE OFFICE OR THROUGH PEOPLE IN THE SAME BUSINESS
YOU COULD HAVE FOUND HIM IF YOU REALLY WANTED TO THOUGH. RIGHT?
HOW?

I'M SURE WE'RE PAYING TAXES JUST TO NURSE PEOPLE LIKE HIM.
HOW UNBELIEVABLE.
WHY DO YOU ASK? WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH MUSIC OR NAKAGAWA?
THIS GUY IS HOPELESS
DO YOU KNOW HOW TO COOK RICE?
OR HOW TO MAKE INSTANT RAMEN?
I SEE. I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT.
I CAN ONLY THINK OF THIS AS A WASTE OF TIME.
AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME,
I SEE.
SO...
...YOU'RE MAD BECAUSE I LEFT YOU ALONE FOR A YEAR?

WHAT A DUMMY.
No! That's not what I meant! Listen to me!
N-

I WONDER WHY...
...I WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT?
Why, why, why, why, why
Clatter
Back off
I'M SORRY
I THOUGHT YOU'D COME TO ME IF I WAITED
Let go of me!
Don't touch my face!
WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY'S USELESS SEX APPEAL?
HOW WOULD I KNOW, you Jishinka!*
I told you, don't touch me
IT SEEMS GOD WASTED IT ON HIM
*A PERSON FULL OF SELF-CONFIDENCE
THE NEAPOLITAN IS READY
OH, IT SMELLS GOOD
ACTUALLY, NAKAGAWA-SAN'S PEPERONCINO* IS MORE DELICIOUS
*AGLIO E OLIO PEPPERONCINO: ANOTHER ITALIAN DISH
Here
Thanks
Well, LET'S PLAY DONJARA WHILE WE EAT
THIS IS MY FAVORITE

If you don't say "Danjara," we won't be able to continue
Get used to it already
Aahhn~
NAKAGAWA
ISN'T IT HARD FOR YOU TO EAT WITH ONE HAND? HERE, LET ME HELP YOU
clatter
I only have my left hand cuffed!
I can eat and play Danjara with one hand!
clank

That's not good
HM?
HEY HEY, WHY ARE YOU THROWING AWAY THE TILES YOU'VE PUT IN ORDER?
It does, doesn't it?
DONJARA IS FUN TOO, RIGHT?
Munch, munch
THIS TASTES GOOD
HERE, LIKE THIS TRY COLLECTING THE ONES YOU LIKE AND MATCHING THEM
You really don't get it
When they all match, you win
Mm hmm

IT MIGHT INSPIRE YOU TO CREATE AMAZING MUSIC
YOU SHOULD PAY MORE ATTENTION TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS
I KNOW, RIGHT?!
THIS IS PRETTY FUN
IT TASTES BETTER IF YOU PUT CHEESE POWDER ON IT
Oh
Munch munch
I SEE. YOU'VE GOT A POINT THERE
*ORIGINALLY BLANK
HEY YOU GUYS...
I TOTALLY FORGOT
Oh
ATCHI!
YOU'VE BECOME FRIENDS TOO EASILY
I'M YOUR PATRON, AREN'T I?
AND WHY ARE YOU TWO TAKING TAKAHASHI AND KAORU'S SIDE?
what an ingrate!

PATRON?
I'M DOING THIS BECAUSE I LIKE YOU NAKAGAWA-SAN
YOU LIKE NAKAGAWA?
HOW MESSY
THIS WORKPLACE IS REALLY MESSED UP.
NOT AS MESSED UP AS YOU.
NAKAGAWA, ARE YOU SAYING THAT THIS ABSENT-MINDED KID IS CUTER THAN ME?

OF COURSE.
Shave your face before you go out
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOU AT ALL.
I'M THAT ABSENT-MINDED KID'S PATRON.
If you're going to use me, couldn't you go with a nicer description?

THAT'S WHAT YOU MEAN BY "PATRON," RIGHT?
HOW MUCH WOULD YOU CHARGE TO GIVE HIM TO ME?
THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER
WELL, LET'S SEE
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU HAVE ANY MONEY AT ALL, SO HOW ARE YOU GOING TO PAY HIM OFF?

Egotist
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T WANT TO, RIGHT?
I CAN'T DO IT
Hustle
CAN YOU WRITE A SONG FOR THIS?

PLEASE FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO COMPOSE MUSIC FOR THIS SONG
THEN IF THAT'S THE CASE,

clatter
THAT WAS MY ORIGINAL PLAN
Key
Here
OF COURSE
OPEN
TORA-SAN W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
Cheerfully
WELL THEN, WE'LL LEAVE YOU TO CONVINCE OUR BOSS
These handcuffs
WILL HELP US WITH THAT
click
Haven't you going to take these off?
A LEATHER-COVERED LOUNGE SUITE, THE NEWEST COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT. AND NOT HAVING KITASENJU* BURNED DOWN
OUR COMPANY'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON THIS JOB

*SUBURB IN TOKYO

You've been handcuffed before?!
DON'T MAKE ME REMEMBER SOMETHING UNPLEASANT
displeased
I'VE HAD BOTH HANDS CUFFED LIKE A CRIMINAL.
Tora-san..
Hmmm.
clank

I WAS ONLY IN JAIL FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.
you guys are going to leave us alone without even asking him why he got arrested?
WELL,
HE PROBABLY JUST SLEPT ON THE STREET OR SOMETHING
OPEN
WE'RE GOING TO GO FIND AYAYA-CHAN

THAT CAT RAN AWAY AGAIN?
IT'S A DOG
Geez
NAKAGAWA-SAN REALLY NEEDS SOMEONE TO TEACH HIM STUFF LIKE THAT
AH
YOU GUYS! WAIT
PULL
Glare
OOPS
Take these off before you go!
END

We're looking for
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(Japanese to English)
and
EDITORS
for our team.
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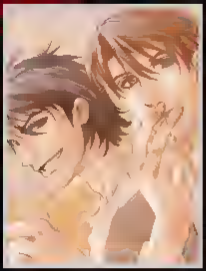
Makeinu no Nandemoya

Asou Kai & Sugano Akira



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Lovers' Convenience Agency
Chapter 5
by sundogs

NAKAGAWA, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
BEING CUFFED TOGETHER LIKE THIS
clank

...IS GIVING ME SOME STRANGE IDEAS

Haha
YOU FORGOT?
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO CAME TO ME AND ASKED IF I'D WRITE A SONG
WHY DO YOU COME TO SEE ME?
Don't play with it.
swing swing
Clang
YOU WERE THE ONE
WHO CAME TO ME
IN THE FIRST PLACE
I GUESS I DID. DIDN'T I?
I ONLY WANTED TO GIVE YOU A JOB
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'LL DO AS YOU'RE TOLD
YOU'VE.

MISSED MUSIC

YOUR MUSIC,
NOT MINE
SOMEDAY, YOU'LL WANT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR MUSIC AGAIN
I WON'T
YOU WILL
NO, I WON'T.
EVEN THOUGH I WANTED TO HEAR YOUR MUSIC,
I WON'T...
BE MAKING MY OWN MUSIC AGAIN

...BE-
CAUSE
...MY
MUSIC IS
INADEQUATE
WHY?
BUT WHEN
YOU MAKE SUCH
A PAINFUL EX-
PRESSION
IT MAKES
ME WANT TO
HOLD YOU
IT'S
REALLY
PAINFUL
...BEING
WITH YOU
SO PLEASE
DON'T COME
NEAR ME

CRASH
STOP IT!
YOU...
blank
GRAB
TSK
AH
YOUR SUBORDINATES SURE DID US A FAVOR...
BY ATTACHING US WITH THESE
stay away!
I...
I'm not very happy with those guys right now!
Oops
Even though you asked me to get away
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO PULLED ME OVER
How rude, Nakagawa
PULL
JK

It feels like the blood vessels in my brain are gonna burst!
I...
SINCE THEN, I FEEL LIKE THINGS ARE SOMEHOW GOING TO WORK OUT.
DAMN.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME TO LIVE A HUNDRED YEARS
I'M ALL MESSED UP
BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME TO DO NORMAL THINGS.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU SATISFIED?
WHY DO YOU KEEP ASKING ME THAT?
DON'T QUESTION EVERY SINGLE THING I DO.
SO, YOU REALLY AREN'T HUMAN?
WHY DO HUMANS—
IT'S JUST A FIGURE OF SPEECH.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU ALWAYS NEED A REASON
I DON'T LIKE THE WORDS,
"WHY?"
IF I COULD CUT OPEN MY CHEST,
AND "HOW COME?"
IF I WERE ABLE TO SHOW YOU...
...WHY I'M ATTRACTED TO YOU OR WHY I LOVE YOU... WOULD YOU BE SATISFIED THEN?
EVEN WITHOUT A REASON, THERE IS MUSIC AND LOVE IN ME
LET'S PUT ASIDE THE MUSIC PART, AND PLEASE STAY AWAY FROM THE TOPIC OF LOVE
BUT I FEEL BOTHERED.
I FEEL LIKE SEEING YOU.
FICKING UP ALL THE THINGS YOU'VE LEFT BEHIND AND CHASING AFTER YOU
IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU WOULD I BOTHER WITH SUCH TROUBLESOME THINGS?

THE THINGS
I'VE LEFT BEHIND, HUH?
I'VE CRIED
I WANTED TO BE YOU
WHILE SAYING THAT
I REALLY DID CRY
AND CLING TO YOU.
JUST LIKE YOU,
I WANT
TO TREASURE MY MUSIC

BUT...
IT'S TOO LATE
IF I WERE LIKE YOU
IF I...
...WAS HONEST AND LOVED MUSIC THE SAME WAY, IT WOULD'VE BEEN GREAT.
I'VE LIVED 'TIL NOW WITHOUT DOING ANY OF THE NORMAL THINGS YOU'VE SUGGESTED
IF I COULD DO THAT, THEN I WOULD BE SOMEWHAT SATISFIED...
I...
OR AT LEAST NOT THINK OF MYSELF AS A FOOL.
IF I EVEN, JUST FOR ONE SECOND... IF I COULD LOVE MY OWN MUSIC

GO AHEAD AND LAUGH AT ME.
THAT'S RIGHT
I'M STILL A STUPID KID WHO HASN'T GROWN UP ONE BIT.
YOU'RE ALIVE.
YOU BREATHE,
YOU CRY,
AND YOU SUFFER.
YOU ARE ALIVE.
I WON'T LAUGH.
NOTHING'S FINAL YET.
THIS IS THE END.
IT'S LIKE I'M DEAD ALREADY.
SOMEONE LIKE ME...

WHEN I SAY "NORMAL THINGS" YOU THINK ONLY OF HAPPINESS LOVE AND BEAUTY RIGHT?
THE PAIN AND TEARS YOU HARBOR...
ARE ALL PART OF THAT AS WELL.
YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IT,
FALLING IN LOVE...
HAVING FAITH...
YOU SUFFER BECAUSE YOU CAN'T GIVE THAT UP, NO MATTER WHAT...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
...WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY.
IT'S OKAY IF I'M THE ONE ASKING...
THEN WHY...
...ARE YOU CRYING?
DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY YOU DON'T LIKE THE WORD "WHY"?

YOU'RE
THAT'S RIGHT
Ah!
YOU CAN CRY IF YOU WANT TO
AND YOU CAN LOVE ME TOO
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE CONFUSED
WELL, WASN'T TWICE ENOUGH?
I've been married twice. I'm straight, really.
No wait!
IT'S THE SAME THING.
That's not what we're talking about!
you're wrong!
SHOVE

So you cried because you wanted to be like me huh?
THAT REALLY MAKES ME FEEL GOOD
you really are the worst!
I will never forget that
Don't hold my shoulder
pull
I HEAR THAT A LOT
w-
Where do you see Love in that?!
YOU'RE PRETTY DUMB FOR FAILING AT IT TWICE
I'M PROBABLY THE ONLY PERSON IN THE WORLD
WHO WILL EVER LOVE YOU THIS MUCH
IT'S STRANGE...
...TO HEAR SOMETHING R TIONAL COMING FROM YOU.

I WONDER...
...IF NAKAGAWA-SAN WILL WRITE THE SONG
NAH
LIKE YOU SAID, NAKAGAWA-SAN IS JUST LETTING HIS STUBBORNNESS GET THE BETTER OF HIM...
YOU'RE FEELING ANXIOUS?
...IF HE DOESN'T RETURN...
TO MUSIC
THAT'S TRUE
SO I GUESS "NANDEMOARI" IS DISBANDING, HUH?
IT CAN'T BE HELPED
IF THAT'S THE CASE, WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?
YOU DON'T THINK...
...YOU'D WANT TO WORK AS A CHEF AGAIN?
I'LL PROBABLY GET A JOB SOMEWHERE
HUH?
Hmm.

A JOB ISN'T WORTH ANYTHING IF YOU CAN'T MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY
BE-CAUSE
I PROB-ABLY WON'T TAKE ANY MORE COOKING-RELATED JOBS
HOW ABOUT YOU, TORA-JIRO!?
HMM
I THINK
I'LL GO BACK TO THE PLACE WHERE I GOT LOST

I SEE
IF I DON'T START FROM WHERE I GOT LOST IN THE FIRST PLACE,
I'LL JUST BE CONTINUING TO DECEIVE MYSELF.
"YOU'LL WIN AS LONG AS YOU TRY." I STILL THINK THAT'S A LIE.
BUT THERE ARE THINGS I NEED TO DO,
EVEN IF I CAN'T WIN.
I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT
MY COACH FROM HIGH SCHOOL HAS A SENPAI WHO IS COACHING FOR THE SECOND STRING TEAM.
I'M HEADING OVER THERE NOW.
HE SAID HE'D LET ME HAVE A PRO TRY-OUT.

REALLY?
I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU
GOOD LUCK
I REALLY WANT YOU TO PLAY BASEBALL
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE YOU'RE BEING LEFT BEHIND
YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT IT AS WELL
THOUGH WE WERE NERVOUS ABOUT NOT HAVING A FUTURE LIKE THOSE OLD PEOPLE,
I GUESS WE HAVE ONE AFTER ALL
YEAH
JUST LIKE MIKI-CHAN, OR THAT LADY-KILLER,
WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE A FUTURE

SPEAKING OF THEM, I HOPE THEY GROW UP SOON.
Hahh
ATSU-SHI...
I DON'T MIND...
— BECOMING YOUR OLD MAN, Y'KNOW?
YEAH?
BECAUSE I LIKE YOU.
UM,
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
LIKE IS LIKE...
EVEN IF YOU ASK ME WHAT KIND OF "LIKE" IT IS, I CAN'T REALLY EXPLAIN.

Hmm
IT'S THE KIND OF "LIKE" THAT BOTH LOVERS AND
FRIENDS HAVE
THAT SORT OF LIKE
HOW SHOULD I PUT IT?
IF YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE DOING ANYTHING ANYMORE
Hmm.
Well, like...
I CAN'T REALLY SAY I'LL TAKE YOU IN AS MY BRIDE
WHAT A
POOR LOVE I HAVE
BUT I'LL SUPPORT YOU
AND PROTECT YOU
ANYWAY,
I'LL HELP YOU ANY WAY I CAN

BUT...
...YOU WOULDN'T WANT THAT, RIGHT
YEAH
I HAVE TO...
...DO IT MYSELF.
ruff
THAT'S RIGHT
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE NOT SURE WHERE TO GO
ER
YOU KNOW,
JUST BECAUSE I'M DOING IT...
BECAUSE YOU'RE YOU.
...DOESN'T ME IN THAT YOU HAVE TO AS WELL,

IF BEING HAPPY WITH YOURSELF MEANS YOU'VE GOTTA WALK ALONE,
THEN I GUESS I HAVE TO
DON'T WORRY.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

All right!
I'm going then
Yeah
Go for it.
ATSUSHI!
Dash

I like you a lot!
GOOD LUCK!
I LIKE YOU A LOT, TOO!
TORAJIROU!
DAMN IT
OH MY GOD, EVEN TORAJIROU IS ACTING LIKE THOSE PEOPLE IN MUSICALS
Ah
Ugh ugh
Good luck
I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A REALLY NORMAL PERSON
WHAT'S IT?
IS HE OKAY?
Chatter
Chatter

open
open
THANK GOD.
I WAS WORRIED I'D BUMP INTO YOU GUYS WHILE YOU WERE HAVING YOUR HANDCUFF PLAY
NAKAGAWA-SAN
WHAT HAPPENED?
T-them?
I CONSIDERED CUTTING OFF TAKAHASHI'S ARM, BUT I FIGURED IT WASN'T WORTH COMMITTING A CRIME
Clank
OH, THIS?
I FOUND A STRONG BLADED KNIFE IN THE KITCHEN, SO I CUT IT.

WHERE'S TAKAHASHI-SAN?
HIS PRECIOUS COOPER GOT TOWED AWAY SO HE WENT AFTER IT
Well.
WHEN I ASKED WHAT HAPPENED, I ACTUALLY MEANT...
THIS?
PLINK
I RECEIVED IT A WHILE AGO
SHE SPENT THE REST OF MY CONSOLATION MONEY ON THIS PIANO
FROM KAORU-SAMA?
Or rather,
YOU'RE RECEIVING CONSOLATION MONEY FROM HER?
EVEN NOW?
Haha
SHE WOULD'VE JUST PAID MY INCOME TAX FOR ME
BUT I DON'T HAVE A JOB
SO...
THERE WILL BE NO MORE MONEY COMING IN, AND MY MUSIC IS NO LONGER POPULAR EITHER
...YOU'RE WRITING THE SONG?

SINCE WE'RE A CONVE-NIENCE AGENCY
WE'LL WRITE SONGS TOO
AAH
ALTHOUGH I LIKE IT,
I REALLY DO LOVE MUSIC

I LIED AND SAID I HATED IT BECAUSE I WAS UNABLE TO GET OTHERS TO LIKE MY MUSIC
LYING ISN'T GOOD
THEY'LL PILE UP
THAT'S RIGHT
TORA-JIROU
THEY PILED UP
IS GOING TO TRY AGAIN
HE WENT TO THE PRO BASEBALL TRY-OUTS
IT MAKES ME FEEL A BIT LONELY

I ONLY KNOW...
...ONE GOOD PHRASE
SEEMS LIKE...
...I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T HAVE SOMETHING
"PEOPLE...
...ARE ALL DIFFERENT"

I DON'T KNOW.
ER...
NAKAGAWA-SAN...
YOU HAVE YOUR OWN STRENGTHS AS WELL.
SUCH AS?
PLUS, I'M NOT GOING TO QUIT "NANDEMOAR!"
BUT TORA-SAN AND I LIKE YOU DON'T WE?
AND I WOULDN'T HAVE REALIZED HOW FAR I'D FALLEN
IF I HADN'T MET YOU WHILE YOU WERE MAKING NASTY ITALIAN FOOD HERE
I WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN HOW ARROGANT I'D BECOME
WHY?
But

THAT'S WHY IT'S MY TURN TO SAVE YOU THIS TIME.
I...
...SAVED YOU?
I THINK I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS RESCUED.
WHEN I SAW THAT YOU KEPT TRYING TO DO THINGS THAT YOU COULDN'T,

light
...IF YOU GUYS EVER FOUND A PLACE YOU'D RATHER BE,
BUT
clatter
I WANT TO SPEND TIME WITH THE FRIENDS I'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO MAKE AFTER SO LONG.
BESIDES,

...MOVED ON.
I WOULDN'T MIND IF YOU...
WHAT...
HAPPENED TO YOU?
You're not running a fever, are you?
open
HUH?
BUT...
MAKE SOME NEAPOLITAN FOR THREE AS WELL
ANYWAY LET'S PREPARE SOME PEPERONCINO* FOR THREE

Gaaaah!
I was told to come again after I practice swinging ten thousand times!
sob sob
HOW COME?
THERE WAS NO WAY HE'D BE ACCEPTED
It's been 4 years since you graduated from high school, right?
AND YOU'VE BEEN EATING NEAPOLITAN NON-STOP
I'LL MAKE YOU SOME PEPERONCINO,
hug
YOU WERE PROBABLY THE ONLY ONE WHO THOUGHT TORA-SAN WOULDN'T COME BACK
SOME-HOW...
...I'VE NEVER BEEN SO RELIEVED IT'S GREAT KNOWING THAT NAKAGAWA-SAN HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL
TORA-SAN

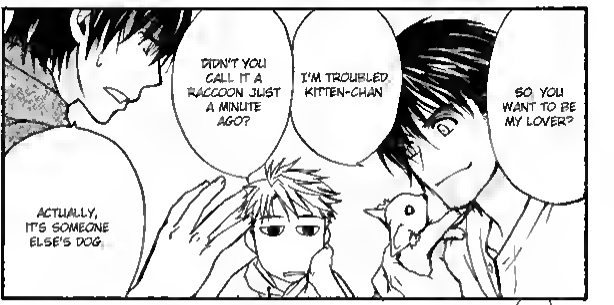
I'll do it ten thousand times!
Rumble Rumble
Yeah!
YOU SHOULD TRY AGAIN
Sigh
Squeak
BANG
WHAT A TOUGH CAR.
Silence
AS EXPECTED HE STOPPED WITH A CRASH
MAKE ME SOME FOOD TOO NAKAGAWA.
Don't come near me
Hm? It smells nice.
what do you want?!
open
I've retrieved my precious Cooper!
Ohh.
IS THAT A STEINWAY & SONS?
Hm?

Whoa!
STEIN...
What's with that piano!?
AN OFFICE WITH A STEINWAY IS THE BEST!
HIRE ME TOO!
LET ME WORK HERE
HOW COULD YOU NOT HAVE NOTICED IT?
THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING EVEN I CAN DO
SO I NEED A JOB ON THE SIDE
FOR SOME REASON, PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS COMING TO COLLECT MONEY,
That's right.
YOU LACK DRIVING SKILLS
...AND YOU LACK COMMON SENSE. PLUS, YOU'RE QUITE HANDSOME SO YOU CAN'T TAIL PEOPLE
I won't hire him!
SO,
WHAT CAN YOU DO?
No way!
Calm down, calm down,
MIKI-CHAN
I WONDER WHAT...?

HUH?
THERE ARE STRANGE SOUNDS COMING FROM OUTSIDE
Scratch scratch
WAN
WAN
Ayaya-chan!
pant pant pant
YOU CAME TO US?
SHE'S ALREADY MY CAT
ISN'T THAT A RACCOON?
Yay

*"YOUNG LADY" IN A POLITE, NEUTRAL MANNER.

Run run run
chatter chatter
Rustle Rustle
Takahashi-san, I think the police have come to pick you up.
HUH?
IT'S QUITE NOISY OUTSIDE


DIDN'T YOU CALL IT A RACCOON JUST A MINUTE AGO?
I'M TROUBLED KITTEN-CHAN
SO, YOU WANT TO BE MY LOVER?
ACTUALLY, IT'S SOMEONE ELSE'S DOG.

Come here...
She's my lover.
Let me hold her too.
Grrrrr
Uwaah!

chatter
HE RAN IN THERE...
rustle
rustle
chatter
Accident?
WHAT'S WITH THIS CAR? It's all worn out
I REALLY THINK
That's right, Treat Miki-chan well.
Hmm.
Come on!
If you get a lover, Nakagawa-san will sulk
rustle
rustle
I WANT
TO LIVE ALONE
chatter
chatter
What is it? What happened?
Convenience Agency
Nandemoari

THANK YOU FOR READING THIS BOOK. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO WERE DISAPPOINTED, PLEASE DON'T ASK FOR A REFUND. (DISAPPOINTMENT CAN BE IMPORTANT IN LIFE, ALTHOUGH I'M NOT SURE IN WHAT WAY...)

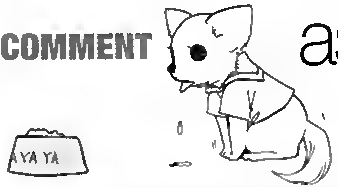
ANYWAY, THIS IS MY FIRST COMIC BOOK. DRAWING MANGA FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S STORY AND PUBLISHING IN A MAGAZINE ARE BOTH NEW EXPERIENCES FOR ME. I'M REALLY GRATEFUL OF EVERYONE'S GENEROSITY IN GIVING ME THIS JOB. WHEN I FIRST READ SUGANO-SENSEI'S STORY, I WAS AFRAID MY DRAWINGS WOULDN'T MATCH ITS IMAGE, BUT SINCE I COULDN'T RUN AWAY, I PREPARED MYSELF FOR THE WORST AND PERSEVERED. THOUGH THE MANGA DIDN'T REALLY TURN OUT THE WAY I WANTED IT TO, DRAWING IT WAS VERY ENJOYABLE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

ALSO, THANK YOU TO KUROKAWA-SAMA FOR ALWAYS HELPING ME. YAGI-SAMA AND ISHII-SAMA, WHO WERE IN CHARGE OF THIS PROJECT, I'M SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE I CAUSED YOU. ISHIDA-SAMA, KAME-SAMA, AND JONMURA-SAMA, THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH AS WELL.

WELL THEN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR READING THIS TO THE VERY END.

2005 2 ASOU KAI

COMMENT



asou kai

EVEN NOW I'M STILL NOT USED TO
DRAWING NAKAGAWA DRAWING TAKAHASHI
POINTLESSLY WAS FUN, THOUGH

COMMENT

THIS IS THE COMIC VERSION OF "MAKEINU NO NANDEMOYA."

HAS IT REALLY BEEN MORE THAN TWO YEARS SINCE I STARTED THIS PROJECT?

IT BEGAN AS A RADIO DRAMA, THEN A CD, AND NOW IT HAS BECOME A MANGA. I'M DEEPLY MOVED.

IN WORKING WITH ALL THE STAFF, THE CAST, ASOU-SENSEI AND A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE WE'VE ACHIEVED MORE THAN JUST A SINGLE CREATION.

ALTHOUGH THE MANGA CONTENT IS THE SAME AS THE RADIO DRAMA AND THE CD, THEY ARE DEFINITELY NOT THE SAME. THIS BOOK HAS GONE THROUGH ASOU-SENSEI'S HANDS AND IS HER OWN WORK.

INSTEAD OF JUST WORKING ALONE, I'VE LEARNT THE HAPPINESS OF WORKING WITH A LOT OF PEOPLE.

ASOU-SENSEI'S NAKAGAWA (I LIKE HIM A LOT!), TAKAHASHI ATSUSHI AND TORAJIROU, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO GOT USED TO ASOU-SENSEI'S VERSION OF NAKAGAWA (I LIKE HIM A LOT!), TAKAHASHI ATSUSHI AND TORAJIROU, YOU MIGHT FIND SOME DIFFERENCES WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THE CD, BUT I HOPE YOU WILL ENJOY IT JUST AS MUCH.

IT MAY HAVE BEEN SURPRISING THAT ASOU-SENSEI AND I WORKED TOGETHER. ONE TIME, WHEN WE WERE TALKING, WE THOUGHT OUR READERS PROBABLY DON'T OVERLAP MUCH. THAT'S WHY WE NEGOTIATED AND CREATED SOMETHING THAT COULDN'T BE ACHIEVED BY JUST ONE PERSON. I LOOKED FORWARD TO THE COMPLETION OF THE COMIC.

ASOU-SENSEI, WHO PUT A LOT OF EFFORT INTO IT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, HAS OFTEN AND REPEATEDLY SAID "I'LL TRY HARD," AND I WILL NEVER FORGET THAT.

I REALLY, REALLY THANK YOU.

SUGANO AKIRA

sugano akira
COMMENT